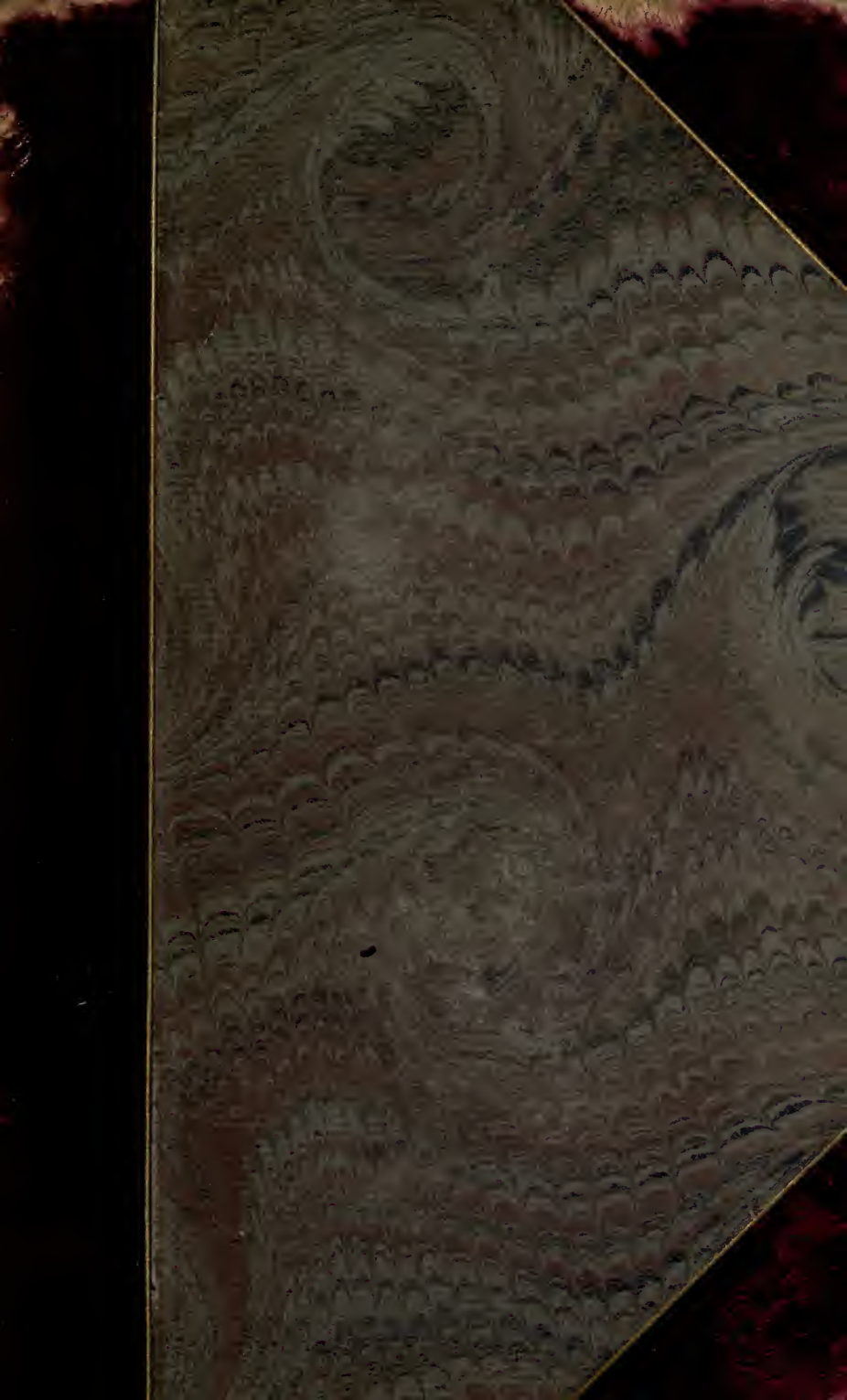

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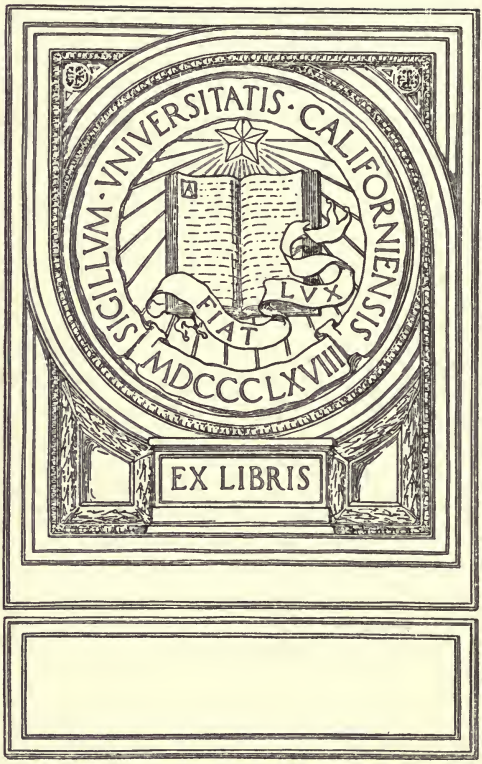
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TRAVELS

IN

AMERICA,

PERFORMED IN THE YEAR 1806,

FOR THE PURPOSE OF

EXPLORING THE RIVERS

ALLEGHANY, MONONGAHELA, OHIO,

AND MISSISSIPPI,

AND

ASCERTAINING THE PRODUCE AND CONDITION

OF

THEIR BANKS AND VICINITY.

BY THOMAS ASHE, ESQ.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR RICHARD PHILLIPS,

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1809.

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1809

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is universally acknowledged, that no description of writing comprehends so much amusement and entertainment as well written accounts of voyages and travels, especially in countries little known. If the voyages of a Cook and his followers, exploratory of the South Sea Islands, and the travels of a Bruce, or a Park, in the interior regions of Africa, have merited and obtained celebrity, the work now presented to the public cannot but claim a similar merit. The western part of America, become interesting in every point of view, has been little known, and misrepresented by the few writers on the subject, led by motives of interest or traffic, and has not heretofore been exhibited in a satisfactory manner. Mr. Ashe, the author of the present work, and who has now returned to America, here gives an account every way satisfactory. With all the necessary acquirements, he went on an exploratory journey, with the sole view of examining this interesting country; and his researches, delivered in the familiar style of letters, in which he carries the reader along with him, cannot fail to interest and inform the politician, the statesman, the philosopher, and antiquary. He explains the delusions that have been held up by fanciful or partial writers as to the country, by which so many indivi-

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duals have been misled ; he furnishes to the naturalist a variety of interesting information ; and to the antiquary he presents objects of absolute astonishment ; the Indian antiquities of the western world, here first brought forward to the public, must create admiration. It will be seen that the fallen race who now inhabit America, are the successors of men who have been capable of architectural and other work, that would do honour to any people or any age ; and the remarkable antiquities which he describes, cannot but induce a still more minute inquiry and investigation of objects of such great importance.

TRAVELS

IN

AMERICA.

LETTER I.

General Character of the North-eastern States of America: Of the Middle States: The Southern—Town of Pittsburg—Alleghany Mountains—Lancaster—The Susquehanna—Harrisburg—Shippensburg, and Strasburg—Interesting Account of a Tavern and its Occupiers—Bedford—Sublimity and Horrors of a Night passed in a Forest—Thoughts on Natural History: St. Pierre.

Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, October, 1806.

DEAR SIR,

I THOUGHT that you knew my heart too well, to attribute my silence to a decay of affection; and I had hopes that you entertained too just an opinion of my head, to expect from me extraordinary discoveries in philosophy or politics. At the same time, I hope to convince you that my supposed neglect has operated to the advantage of my correspondence.

The American States through which I have passed, are unworthy of your observation. Those to the north-east are indebted to nature for but few gifts: they are better adapted for the business of grazing than for corn. The climate is equally subject to the two extremes of burning heat and excessive cold; and bigotry, pride, and a malignant hatred to the mother-country, characterize the inhabitants. The middle States are less contemptible: they produce grain for exportation; but wheat requires much labour, and is liable to blast on the sea-shore. The national features here are not strong, and those of different emigrants have not yet

composed a face of local deformity: we still see the liberal English, the ostentatious Scotch, the warm-hearted Irish, the penurious Dutch, the proud German, the solemn Spaniard, the gaudy Italian, and the profligate French. What kind of character is hereafter to rise from an amalgamation of such discordant materials, I am at a loss to conjecture.

For the southern States, nature has done much, but man little. Society is here in a shameful degeneracy: an additional proof of the pernicious tendency of those detestable principles of political licentiousness, which are not only adverse to the enjoyment of practical liberty, and to the existence of regular authority, but destructive also of comfort and security in every class of society; doctrines here found by experience, to make men turbulent citizens, abandoned Christians, inconstant husbands, unnatural fathers, and treacherous friends. I shun the humiliating delineation, and turn my thoughts to happier regions which afford contemplation without disgust; and where mankind, scattered in *small* associations, are not totally depraved or finally corrupt. Under such impressions, I shall write to you with pleasure and regularity; trusting to your belief, that my propensity to the cultivation of literature has not been encouraged in a country where sordid speculators alone succeed, where classic fame is held in derision, where grace and taste are unknown, and where the ornaments of style are condemned or forgotten. Thus guarding you against expectations that I should fear to disappoint, I proceed to endeavour at gratifying the curiosity which my ramblings excite in your mind.

The town of Pittsburg* is distant rather more than 300 miles from Philadelphia; of which space, 150 miles are a continued succession of mountains, serving as a barrier against contending seas; and as a pregnant source of many waters, which take opposite directions, and after fertilizing endless tracts, and enriching various countries, are lost in the immensity of the Mexican Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean. Knowing the road to be mountainous and stony, I preferred travelling on horseback to going in a stage-coach, that is seven or eight days on the road; and the fare in which, for the whole journey, is twenty-four dollars. The first sixty miles were a turnpike road; and my horse, which cost me only eighty dollars, arrived tolerably fresh at the end of them in twelve hours.

* Situated in latitude 40° 26′ north, and longitude 79° 48′ west from London.

The place at which I stopped was Lancaster, the county-town of Pennsylvania. The inhabitants are chiefly Dutch and Irish, or of Dutch and Irish extraction: they manufacture excellent rifle-guns and other hardware. The town is large, clean, and well built; but in spite of these attractions, I quitted it the next morning by sun-rise. Dr. Johnson was never more solicitous to leave Scotland, than I was to be out of the Atlantic States.

In hurrying along the next day, my career was interrupted by the rapid Susquehanna. The peevishness and dissatisfaction which before possessed me, were now compelled to yield to contrary sensations. The breadth and beauty of the river, the height and grandeur of its banks, the variation of scenery, the verdure of the forests, the murmur of the water, and the melody of birds, all conspired to fill my mind with vast and elevated conceptions.

Harrisburg, a handsome Dutch town, stands on the east bank of this river. I did not stop, however, but pursued my course to Carlisle; which has a college, and the reputation of a place of learning. This may be so, but I have the misfortune to dispute it; for though indeed I saw an old brick building called *the university*, in which the scholars had not left a whole pane of glass, I did not meet a man of decent literature in the town. I found a few who had learning enough to be pedantic and impudent in the society of the vulgar, but none who had arrived at that degree of science which could delight and instruct the intelligent.

Having thus no motive for delay here, I passed on to Shippensburg and Strasburg, both German or Dutch towns; the latter at the foot of the stupendous mountains before alluded to, and which are called the Alleghany. During the first and second days, I met with no considerable objects but such as I was prepared to expect; immense hills, bad roads, and frightful precipices: I drove my horse before me most of the distance. On the evening of the third, about dusk, I arrived at the tavern where I meant to repose: it was a miserable log-house, filled with emigrants who were in their passage to the Ohio; and a more painful picture of human calamity was seldom beheld:—old men embarking in distant arduous undertakings, which they could never see realized: their children going to a climate destructive to youth; and the wives and mothers partaking of all these sufferings, to become victims in their turn to the general calamity. This scene held out no very strong temptation to me for passing the night here, but there was no alterative;

for my horse was tired, the wolves were out, and the roads impassable in the dark: the fire-side too, and all the seats, were occupied, and the landlord was drunk. I was too much engrossed however with the distress round me, sensibly to feel my own. I stood in fact motionless, with my arms folded, and fell into a reverie; from which I was roused by a meteor crossing the room, or at least my surprise was as great as would have been occasioned by such a phenomenon. It was a beautiful young woman,

> ——————" Fitted or to shine in courts
> With unaffected grace; or walk the plain,
> With innocence and meditation join'd
> In soft assemblage."

She spoke to her father, and then addressed me with infinite grace: lamenting that their accommodation " was so bad for a gentleman;" and offering to make a fire and serve supper up stairs, and strive to make me as comfortable as the situation and circumstances would permit. In a short time she was as good as her word; and invited me to a small room, clean and warm, with supper already served. In all this proceeding; in her conversation, actions, and manners; there was a merit which could not be the result of a common mind. Her person was tall and elegant: her eyes were large and blue: her features regular and animated; and expressive of a pride and dignity which the meanest clothing, and the strongest consciousness of her humble circumstances in life, could neither destroy nor conceal. I desired her to sit down, and then questioned her on local subjects: her answers were neat and sensible. I extended my inquiries to a wider range: talking of natural curiosities in the neighbourhood, the face of the country, manners, books, &c. and to these particulars also her replies were judicious, intelligent, and unassuming. She had read much; and the impression which this had made on her, appeared favourable to her retired life, to virtue, and to feeling: too much so to the latter; for when I exclaimed, " By what accident has one so lovely in person, so improved in understanding, and so delicate in mind, become the inhabitant of these terrific mountains, these gloomy woods?" she burst into tears, and left me. I then rose from table, called the ostler, and saw my horse fed; and this man explained the mystery. The young lady's father, it seems, was an Irishman; who, having been once opulent, gave his children the most refined education which his country could afford. He was respected and

happy: they were admired and beloved. In an evil day, some jealous demon infused into his heart disaffection to his king: he associated with misguided characters, was implicated in their guilt, and with them banished from his native land. His amiable and suffering family followed him to America; where, soon after his arrival, some swindlers stripped him of most of his money. He took refuge in profligacy and drink; his wife died of a broken heart; his child is fading in unmerited misery; and he is left to drag on a wretched existence, which in the moments of reason must be embittered to a degree too painful to hear, or almost to think of.

I saw Eleanor (for that was the name of this interesting creature) the next morning, when she had returned to her usual duties and apparent serenity. I had an elegant edition of Thomson in my pocket, which attracted her notice as it lay on my supper-table the night before. I now wrote a romantic but just compliment on a blank leaf in it, and then presented to her the book: after which I instantly mounted my horse, and resumed my journey; deprecating the revolutionary politics which had brought this family, and thousands of others, into such ignominy and distress.

The town of Bedford is next to Strasburg, and consists of about two hundred well built houses. It is natural to inquire into the motives which could tempt men to settle in a region so remote from commerce and the world: iron-mines, and some fine *interval land* (as it is here called), were the original attractions. Bedford is but a short day's ride from the highest mountain of the prodigious chain; and which, by way of distinction, is called exclusively "the Alleghany:" the others having received names from local events, or something remarkable in their features; as *Coneecocheque*, or Bloody Mountains, the Three Brothers, the Walnut, and the Laurel Hills, &c. I travelled along so attentive to the objects round me, and wasted so much time in visionary speculations, that I was overtaken by night on the summit of the mountain; where the road was narrow and bounded by frightful precipices. If I attempted to advance, a stumble and rapid death was unavoidable; or if I remained where I was, wolves, panthers, and tiger-cats, were at hand to devour me. I chose the latter risk, as having less of fatal certainty in it: I thought I could effect something by resistance; or that fortune might favour me by giving a more suitable supper, and a different hunting-ground, to the ferocious animals.

The progress of night was considerably advanced; and the powerful exhalations of the preceding sun, for want of wind to disperse or waft them to other parts, were returning to their parent woods. They at first hovered, in the form of transparent clouds, over small creeks and rivulets in the intervals of the mountain: and then assumed a wider range, spreading over the entire valley, and giving to it the appearance of a calm continued sea. This beautiful transfiguration took place several hundred feet below me; while the summit of the hill had no mist, and the dew was not sensible. The moon shone, but capriciously; for though some places were adorned with her brightest beams, and exhibited various fantastic forms and colours, others were unaffected by her light, and awfully maintained an unvaried gloom; a "darkness visible," conveying terror and dismay.

Such apprehensions were gaining fast on my imagination, till an object of inexpressible sublimity gave a different direction to my thoughts, and seized the entire possession of my mind. The heavenly vault appeared to be all on fire: not exhibiting the stream or character of the aurora-borealis; but an immensity vivid and clear, through which the stars, detached from the firmament, traversed in eccentric directions, followed by trains of light of diversified magnitude and brightness. Many meteors rose majestically out of the horizon: and having gradually attained an elevation of thirty degrees, suddenly burst; and descended to the earth in a shower of brilliant sparks, or glittering gems. This splendid phenomenon was succeeded by a multitude of shooting-stars, and balls and columns of fire; which, after assuming a variety of forms (vertical, spiral, and circular), vanished in slight flashes of lightning, and left the sky in its usual appearance and serenity. "Nature stood checked" during this exhibition: all was

"A death-like silence, and a dread repose."

Would it had continued so for a time! for I had insensibly dropped on my knees; and felt that I was offering to the great Creator of the works which I witnessed, the purest tribute of admiration and praise. My heart was full: I could not suppress my gratitude, and tears gushed from my eyes.

These pious, these pleasing sensations, were soon forced to yield to others arising out of the objects and circumstances round me. The profound silence maintained during the

luminous representation, was followed by the din of the demon of the woods. Clouds of owls rose out of the valleys, and flitted screaming about my head. The wolves too held some prey in chace, probably deer: their howlings were reverberated from mountain to mountain; or, carried through the windings of the vales, returned to the ear an unexpected wonder. Nor was the panther idle; though he is never to be heard till in the act of springing on his victim, when he utters a horrid cry. The wolf, in hunting, howls all the time; certainly with the view of striking terror: for, being less fleet than many of the animals on which he subsists, they would escape him if he did not thus check their speed by confounding their faculties. This is particularly the case with the deer: at the hellish cry, the poor animal turns, stops, and trembles; his eyes fill; his flanks heave; his heart bursts; and he dies the moment before the monster rushes upon him. The tiger-cat was busily employed close by me. Like our little domestic creature of the same species, he delights in tormenting, and is admirably skilled in the art. He had now caught an opossum, as I understood by the lamentations, but was in no haste to kill it. By the action and noise, he must have let it escape his clutches several times, and as often seized and overpowered it again; dropping it from the tree, and chasing it up the trunk, till the wretch being wearied at length with his vagaries and cruelty, he strangled and devoured it.

The intervals between these cries and roarings, were filled by the noise of millions of other little beings. Every tree, shrub, plant, and vegetable, harboured some thousands of inhabitants, endowed with the faculty of expressing their passions, wants, and appetites, in different tones and varied modulations. The most remarkable was the voice of whip-poor-will: plaintive and sad, "Whip poor Will!" was his constant exclamation; nor did he quit his place, but seemed to brave the chastisement which he so repeatedly lamented. The moon, by this time, had sunk into the horizon; which was the signal for multitudes of lightning-flies to rise amidst the trees, and shed a new species of radiance round. In many places, where they rose and fell in numbers, they appeared like a shower of sparks; and in others, where thinly scattered, they emitted an intermittent pleasing ray.

At length the day began to dawn: both the noisy and the glittering world now withdrew, and left to Nature a silent solemn repose of one half-hour. This I employed in reflec-

tions on the immensity and number of her works, and the presumption of man, in pretending to count and describe them. Whoever dares to compose the history of Nature, should first pass a night where I did: he would there be taught the vanity of his views, and the audacity of his intentions. He would there learn, that though gifted with a thousand years of life, and aided by ten thousand assistants, he still would be hardly nearer to his purpose; neither the time nor the means would be sufficient for him to pourtray, with their properties, the herbs under his foot, and, with their affections, the insects that dwell among them. Yet every country has its natural historian! A residence of three weeks, and a daily walk of two hours for that period, are deemed an ample qualification for the discovery and character of the productions of some of the finest regions on the globe. Such was not the disposition of St. Pierre: after passing many years in the laborious search of natural objects, and many years more in investigating their laws and principles, as a preparation for writing the history of Nature, he abandoned the pursuit as impracticable and impious; and favoured the world merely with his Studies, which are beautiful, intelligent, and unassuming.

I conclude for the present; again entreating you to observe, that in my letters you are not to look for the graces of style, or peculiar accuracy of detail. I write from the heart; from the impulse of the impressions made by real events; and this will, I hope, sufficiently gratify your tender and amiable feelings. T. A.

LETTER II.

Sun-rise in a deep Valley—Breakfast at an Inn—American Forests generally free from Underwood—The Author kills a large Bear in the Forest: its deliberate precaution on being Shot—An Indian Camp: gradual Expulsion of the Indians into the Interior, and their near Extermination—Grandeur and beautiful Tints of an Autumnal Scene—Laurel-Hill—Delightful Vale leading to Pittsburg—Expences at the American Inns —Comfort, a Term of very various Application.

Pittsburg, October, 1806.

AS day approached from the east, I recommenced my journey. The sun soon after coloured "in gay attire" some of the summits of the mountains, but his luminous body was not visible for a considerable time; and when it did appear in all its majesty, its rays were for several hours too oblique to penetrate the depths of the valley, and disperse the ocean of vapour which the preceding day had formed. It was interesting to observe with what reluctance the mists dissipated. Till touched by the magic beam, they were one uniform sheet: they then assumed a variety of forms; clouds representing grotesque and lively figures, crowning some of the highest trees. Some descended to the bosom of the stream, and followed the windings of the waters; others hovered over fountains and springs; while the larger portion rose boldly to the mountain-tops, in defiance of the sun, to gain the higher atmosphere, and again descend to the earth in dew or showers.

The birds, with the first dawn, left the recesses of the valleys; and taking their elevated seats, "joined in one universal choir." At least, nothing had more the resemblance of a general thanksgiving, or oblation of praise, to the Author of life and light; and though it might have been but a burst of exultation for the return of morn, I preferred thinking it a grateful expression of worship, which said to me: "Go thou and do likewise."

It was near ten before I had descended the mountain, and reached a place of refreshment. You may conceive how much I was exhausted; and how much I felt for my horse,

who had fasted all night after a tedious journey. In recompense I now took good care of him, and resolved to let him rest the remainder of the day. Indeed I was pr possessed in favour of this inn: for it was clean, the landlady civil, and her husband sober; three extraordinary circumstances, and which I little expected to meet on that road. My breakfast consisted of Indian bread, wild pigeons, and coffee made of native pease; nothing could be more conformable to the place and to my appetite. During the repast I conversed with my host on subjects which I supposed within the range of his information and capacity. I was mistaken: he was entirely unacquainted with the country round him. He never went west, because he had no business; on the east, he was bounded by the mountain, which he was determined never to ascend; and on his right and left was a wilderness which he feared to penetrate, as it abounded with wild beasts, snakes, and reptiles of all kinds.

I borrowed his gun and ammunition; and having *set* the house with a pocket-compass, took a north-west course through the woods. The American forests have generally one very interesting quality, that of being entirely free from under or brush-wood. This is owing to the extraordinary height, and spreading tops, of the trees; which thus prevent the sun from penetrating to the ground, and nourishing inferior articles of vegetation. In consequence of the above circumstance, one can walk in them with much pleasure, and see an enemy from a considerable distance. I soon felt the advantage of this; for I had not been long out, before a bear fell from a tree, and rose erect, about twenty yards before me. He was in the act of looking up to the branch from which he had slipped, when I fired, and lodged a ball in his groin. He staggered, and leant against a tree: but recovering a little from the pain and surprise, he deliberately stooped to pick up a quantity of clean leaves; which with the utmost precaution he stuffed into the wound, and thus stopped the flood of blood. I was prepared to fire a second time, but my heart failed me: I was overcome by the firmness which he shewed on receiving the shot, and the means he employed to correct its injury. He tried to climb the tree once more, but could not: the vital stream again rushed out; he fell to the ground, uttered a deep cry, and almost immediately expired. He was a very large animal; his tusks being five inches long, and his paw fifteen inches by five.

I continued on my way, till I came to a wood of younger

growth, interspersed with spots entirely clear of timber and marked by traces of former cultivation. I examined the place with care: it was an Indian camp; such as is often seen from the borders of the Atlantic to the great western waters, and even to the Pacific Ocean. Not that the Indians originally took this situation, or any other inland one, from choice; on the contrary, their pursuits and their happiness lay on the coasts of the sea, and the banks of navigable rivers; where they could lead a life congenial to the climate, adequate to their few wants, and suitable to their propensities. Thus they lived, regardless of the wealth and beauty of the interior, till the overflowing population of your country, and the religious and political tyranny of others, inspired a love of emigration, and brought on the shores a flood from which the native inhabitants were obliged to recede; renouncing at once their habits, their accustomed aliments and pleasures, the burial-places of their fathers, and the residence of their gods. So great was their respect to "white men," that they retreated without making any opposition; and with bleeding hearts began to settle in the back-grounds, to live on meat instead of fish, to build *tumuli* for their dead, and sanctuaries for the "Great Spirit" who they hoped had followed them into the wilderness. Innocent intentions! unassuming views! yet these too were frustrated. Wave after wave followed the first inundation; each gaining new ground, and forcing this devoted people into the plains; where they were only permitted to live long enough to form habits, and improve the land, and then were driven to the mountains, to feel the vicissitudes of other climates, range amid barren rocks, and combat for food with beasts of prey. Even this state of miserable existence was still to be denied them. They were hunted from these dreary haunts, and compelled to descend the mountains: not on their own native eastern side, but on the western, which was the soil of their enemies, other savage nations who lived on the margins of the great waters, and who were at eternal war with the rest of mankind. The remainder of their history is obvious: mutual and repeated hostilities, the alteration of climate and mode of life, and disease and intemperance introduced among them by the whites, have nearly annihilated the whole race. From the Atlantic to the Mississippi, a distance of two thousand miles, ten thousand Indians (out of twenty millions) do not at this day exist.

The camp which I was contemplating, therefore, was oc-

cupied as a last refuge in the hour of melancholy and despair. It is hid in the depth of the valley, amidst the profoundest gloom of the woods; and at the period of its first establishment, must have been nearly inaccessible. I spent three hours in exploring it; and found it to consist of, 1. A regular circle, a hundred paces in diameter, the perpendicular rise of the circumference of which is at least four feet; 2. The site of about two hundred huts, placed at regular distances between the circle and the foot of a steep hill; and 3. The mounds of the dead. The space contained in the circle was used according to the exigencies of the times. In peace it was the forum where their wise men and elders met to deliberate on the affairs of the nation; distribute impartial justice; exercise their youth in various combats; and instruct them in religious worship, of which dancing constituted a considerable part:—in war it was the assembly of their fighting-men; where they debated on measures of prudence, and stratagems of ingenuity. If the enemy attacked them in the camp, the old men, the wives, and children, with their effects, were placed in the centre of the circle; while the warriors surrounded them as an impenetrable barrier, guarding the wall entirely round, and shouting defiance to the assailants. Nearly two hundred years have now elapsed since England sent her fiery zealots and furious bigots to one part of America; while France, regurgitating robbers and prostitutes, colonized another. Was this a means to improve a people and reclaim a country; and can its original inhabitants be condemned for not accepting even a gospel and laws offered them at the point of the sword? Are they to be reproached for indolence, vice, and drunkenness, when most experienced instructors came among them to teach these baneful practices? Had the first settlers been animated by the principles of an enlightened humanity, how different would now be the face of society and nature here! population would abound; agriculture flourish; the wide desert be a smiling plain, loaded with waving corn; commerce would have opened extensive roads, the arts and the sciences following in her train; and the cross, that holy emblem which is now disfigured by violence, blood, and corruption, would be seen elevated on myriads of temples, and glittering through all the parts of the new world.

At four o'clock the sun had left the valley, and I had to hasten away so as to reach my tavern before night. This I effected, to the surprise of my hosts; for, from the length

of my stay, they began to imagine me to have lost myself, or been devoured by wild beasts. An American has no conception of a person's being able to derive pleasure from a walk, or information from solitude; his sluggish faculties require palpable and active objects to give them exercise. I mention this to account for the astonishment of my landlord at my delay, and his insensibility to the enjoyments which a contemplative walk would every day present. Finding that I could derive no information from such a man (who knew nothing of the camp, and, as his wife said, "did not heed such things—not he"), I hastily took some refreshment, retired to rest, and departed next morning, with a fine sun, and the promise of a delightful day.

Autumn had already begun to shed a varied tint over the numerous subjects of her rich domain. I amused myself in endeavouring to count and classify the colours which she employs to diversify Nature, and distinguish her reign from that of the other seasons: but I made little progress; for the scene was too grand, extensive, and sublime, to come under the confined controul of human calculation. I was on a vast eminence, commanding a view of a valley in which stood millions of trees, and from which many millions more gradually rose in the form of an immense amphitheatre. It appeared as if every tree, though many were of the same class, had shades, hues, and characters, peculiar to itself; derived from individual attitude, growth, and soil; and presentation to heavenly bodies, and the emanations issuing from them. It was one of those scenes on which the mind could dwell with infinite rapture; but which can never be described with justice and truth, except by one inspired by Him,

"Whose breath perfumes them, and whose pencil paints."

But

"Who can paint
Like Nature? Can imagination boast,
Amidst her gay creation, hues like these?"

THOMSON.

Between this spot and Pittsburg I passed two flourishing little towns; first crossing the celebrated Laurel-hill, so called from its ridge being for several miles crowned with trees of that kind. This hill is remarkably steep and stony. Nothing worthy of mention struck my notice till I arrived

within three miles of Pittsburg, when I descended into the beautiful vale which leads into that town. It was impossible to behold any thing more interesting than this: it extended three miles on a perfect level, cultivated in the highest degree; bounded by a rising ground on the left, and a transparent river on the right; and leading to a well inhabited town, where I meant to repose after a journey of 320 miles, 150 of them over stupendous mountains and barren rocks. Such a sight could not fail of gratifying and enchanting me; giving serenity to the mind, and gratitude to the heart; and awakening in the soul its most amiable and distinguished affections.

In sending you this sketch, I have not stopped to detail the inferior particulars of the journey. It is of little consequence where a traveller sleeps, where and what he eats, and whether he was comfortable, &c. In travelling along this and every other road in America, a stranger is furnished with a route indicating the best inns, and their distances from each other: as to the expence, it seldom varies; being a quarter of a dollar for lodging, the same sum for every meal, and half a dollar a night for a horse. With regard to *comfort*, that favourite British word is too vague for general explanation; as it relates to comparison, habit, and sensibilities. If the English miss cleanliness, the French coffee, the Duch tobacco, the Germans beer, the Russians oil, the Italians chocolate, the Spaniards garlic, the Turks opium, the Tartars milk, the Indians rice, and so on through every nation, they never consider themselves *comfortable;* and hence we hear the same house praised by one guest, and vilified by another.

LETTER III.

Situation and Description of Pittsburg—Its Manufactories, Ship-building, and Population—State of Education here—Character and Persons of the Ladies—Religious Sects—Schools—Market-house, and Prices of Provisions—Price of Land—Amusements.

Pittsburg, October, 1806.

I AM afraid I tire your patience: three letters from this place, and yet it remains undescribed! Excuse me: I now commence.

No inland town in the United States, or perhaps in the world, can boast of a position superior to this, both as to its beauty, and also the many advantages with which it is attended; it being delightfully situated at the head of the Ohio, and on the point of land formed by the junction of the Alleghany and the Monongahela rivers. The site of the old French garrison Duquesne, which was taken by general Forbes in the year 1758, is immediately at the confluence of the two streams; and commands a charming view of each, as well as of the Ohio. The British garrison Fort Pitt (so called after the late earl of Chatham, and erected near the former post), higher up on the Monongahela, was once a place of some consequence as a frontier settlement, but fell into decay on being given up by its founders. As it was included in one of the manors of the Penn family, it was sold by the proprietaries; and now makes a part of the town of Pittsburg, and is laid out in town-lots. Fort Fayette, built a very few years since, is also within the limits of the town, on the bank of the Alleghany: a garrison is at present kept there; and for the most part, it is made headquarters for the army of the United States.

The spot on which this town stands, is so commanding (in the military phrase) that it has been emphatically called the key to the western country: and its natural situation is peculiarly grand and striking. Blest as it is with numerous advantages, there is nothing surprising in its having increased rapidly within the last few years. It contains about four hundred houses, many of them large and elegantly built with brick; and above two thousand inhabitants. It abounds with mechanics, who cultivate most of the different manufactures that are to be found in any other part of the United States; and possesses upward of forty retail *stores**, which all seem continually busy. To this place most of the goods conveyed in waggons over the mountains in spring and autumn, and destined for the Kentucky and Louisiana trade, are brought, to be ready for embarkation.

Many valuable manufactories have been lately established here; among which are those of glass, nails, hats, and tobacco. The manufacture of glass is carried on extensively, and that article is made of an excellent quality. There are two establishments of this sort; one for the coarser, and the other for the finer kinds.

* The common name for the places of sale in America and the colonies; differing from *shops* in being generally larger, and always dealing in a vast variety of articles, including every thing that can be expected to be asked for.

Ship-building is practised to a considerable extent in and near this town, and several vessels of from 10 to 350 tons are now on the stocks. They are frequently loaded here with flour, hemp, glass, and provisions; and then descend with the stream to the sea, a distance of 2300 miles; the only instance of such a length of fresh water inland navigation, for vessels of such burthen, known in the world.

The principal inhabitants of Pittsburg are Irish, or of Irish origin: this accounts for the commercial spirit of the place, and the good breeding and hospitality which in general prevail throughout it.—Colonel O'Hara, and majors Kirkpatrick and Grey, have been long distinguished for the liberality of their character, and their generous attention to strangers. I am indebted to them for much information and kindness; and whenever my mind wants a subject capable of affording it the most pleasing contemplation, it shall revert to the many happy hours which I enjoyed in their society, and that of their amiable families. The influence of these and many other gentlemen of similar sentiments, is very favourable to the town; and has hindered the vicious propensities of the genuine American character, from establishing here the horrid dominion which they have assumed over the Atlantic States.

Education is not attended to by the men, so much as by the ladies. The former enter into business so early, that they are obliged to abandon their studies before they are half completed; but the latter, having no other view than the improvement of their faculties, pass many years in pursuit of solid information and fashionable attainments. Hence they acquire a great superiority over the other sex. The ladies of Pittsburg manifest this superiority in a very high degree, but do not abuse it. Modest and unassuming, they conceal for a considerable time their embellishments; and when they permit them to shine out, it is to please a husband, father, or acquaintance, and not for the gratification of ambition or the humiliation of friends. None of their sensations appear to be violent: their character exhibits more of a serene repose than of a boisterous energy. Their form is slender, person tall, and voice melodious; the hair light; the eye mild; the gesticulation easy; and in a word, the whole of their manner, action, and appearance, denotes a temperate soul, an excellent heart, and an improved mind. I am happy to say that these are the leading features of many American women: it gives me great pleasure to render this justice to them; and to assure you,

that when I expressed the supreme disgust excited in me by the people of the United States, the ladies were by no means included in the general censure. Indeed it is a highly interesting fact, that the character of women is in every country more fixed and stable than that of men: the polished females of your court, the innocent ones of your fields and villages, and the females (cultivated or savage) of the most distant regions, have one universal indelible obligation impressed upon them: to be the entertaining companions, the charming associates, the bosom friends, and the faithful comforters, of man. This obligation they obey throughout the world. The vicissitudes of life, which cause a deplorable difference in the conduct of men, exercise no power over *their* affections; except that their love is strengthened by our adversity, and their friendship increased by our calamities. When the yellow fever is preying on the exanimate wretch; when the vital stream urges a passage from every pore; when his servants, and the nearest and dearest of his own sex, fly the dread contagion; who stays to check the crimson effusion, to offer the last sad remedy, to cool the burning tongue, to correct the putrid air, to receive the solemn parting injunction, and the last agonizing embrace? who but the wife of his bosom, or the favourite of his heart?

Happily for this place, religion is not extinct, though the professors of it are employing the best possible means for effecting its destruction. They are frittering it into a thousand ceremonies, a thousand absurd and eccentric shapes. In fact, religious worship is expressed here by every vagary that can enter into a disturbed mind. Some sit still, and appear to commune with themselves in silence and solemnity: others, on the contrary, employ themselves in violent gesticulation, and shouting aloud. Some, in mere obedience to the *letter* of the apostle's instruction, to "become as little children," think it right to play and roll on the floor, tumble, dance, sing, or practise gymnastic and various other juvenile games. Others deny the necessity of at all frequenting the house of the Lord: and accordingly turn out into the wilderness; where they fast, pray, and howl in imitation of the wolves. I did not inquire into the arguments by which the *merits* of these contradictory proceedings are supported: I was content on being assured that the better kind of people frequent the protestant church and the Romish chapel.—I cannot omit mentioning, that even the

dress and the costume of the hair and beard, are made subservient to religious opinions. Yesterday, while walking with an intelligent acquaintance, there advanced toward us out of a wood, a being that appeared to me a bear in disguise, wrapped in an immense cloak; and a hat like an umbrella unfurled, covering its head. Under this impression, I could not help exclaiming: "What the deuce is that?" My friend laughed, and told me it was a *Menonite:* "a harmless creature," continued he, "belonging to a sect who never inhabit towns, nor ever cut their beard, hair, or nails; wash or clean themselves; and whose dress, habits, and general mode of life, are at variance with those of the rest of mankind." Pity now succeeded the error which I at first entertained.

I am sorry that I cannot make a favourable report of the scholastic establishments of this town. There is but one of a public nature; which is called an academy, and supported by the voluntary munificence of the place. It is under the direction of a number of trustees; who employ themselves so much in altercation whenever they meet, that they have not yet had time to come to any mutual understanding on its concerns. There is, however, a master appointed, who instructs about twenty boys in a sort of transatlantic Greek and Latin, something in the nature of what the French call *patois*, but which serves the purpose of the pupils as well as if their teacher were a disciple of Demosthenes or Cicero.

There are a few private schools where the principles of grammar, rhetoric, and a sound English education, may be acquired: the young ladies, while day-scholars, generally attend a *master*, and the present minister of the English church is principal of a school for the fair sex. His course of study is very liberal, philosophical, and extensive. Some of his scholars compose with great elegance, and read and speak with precision and grace. He makes them acquainted with history, geography, and polite literature; together with such other branches of instruction as are necessary to correct the judgment and refine the taste.

The market-house, which stands in a square in the centre of the town, is frequented almost daily, but more particularly on two stated days of the week, by vast numbers of country-people, who bring to it provisions of every description.

The beef is excellent, and is often sold as cheap as three

cents a pound*; good veal, at seven cents; and pork at three dollars a hundred weight. Remarkably fine fowls cost about a shilling a couple. Quails, partridges, pigeons, and game of various kinds, are abundant, and sold at prices equally reasonable. Venison and bear-meat also are often brought to market; a haunch of the former may be bought for half a dollar, and a flitch of the latter for about twice as much. Vegetables and fruit are plentiful, but rather higher in proportion than other articles. Butter is generally fourteen cents a pound; eggs, five cents a dozen; and milk, three cents a quart. From this statement you will readily perceive that living here must be extremely cheap: the best taverns charge half a dollar a day for three meals and lodging; and there are boarding-houses on the terms of only a hundred dollars a year for board, lodging, and washing. The great towns on the Atlantic are vastly dearer; in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Charlestown, the average price of decent accommodation being ten dollars a week. Those places however have the advantage in respect to foreign manufactures, wine, and liquor: for their Madeira is a dollar a bottle, but here it is a dollar and a half; and spirits of course are in the same rates. This is the natural effect of the dangerous, difficult, and expensive, land-carriage. As these latter are articles of luxury, their weight falls alone on the affluent: the other classes of society have excellent porter brewed in the town at a very cheap rate, and whiskey is to be had for two shillings a gallon.

The price of land varies with the quality, the distance from the town, and other causes. Farms on the margins of navigable waters are 300 per *cent.* dearer than those lying behind them. Good land on the banks of a river, and near a market-town, is not to be had under ten dollars an acre; but land under contrary circumstances brings only from one to two, or five dollars. Such land yields from twenty to thirty bushels of wheat, and from forty to sixty bushels of Indian corn.

As for the amusements here, they are under the dominion of the seasons. In winter, *carioling* or *sleying* predominates: the snow no sooner falls, than pleasure, bustle, and confusion, banish business, speculation, and strife; nothing is seen but mirth, and nothing is heard but harmony. All young men of a certain condition provide themselves with

* A hundred cents make a dollar.

handsome carioles and good horses, and take out their favourite female friends, whom with much dexterity they drive through the streets; calling on every acquaintance, and taking refreshment at many an open house. For the night, an appointment is generally made by a large party (for instance, the company of twenty or thirty carioles) to meet at a tavern several miles distant; to which they go by torch-light, and accompanied by music. On arriving there, the ladies cast off their fur pelisses, assume all their beauties, and with the men commence the mazy dance. This is followed by supper, songs, catches and glees. When the voice of Prudence dispels the charm, they resume their vehicles, and return delighted with the moments which they have thus passed: this is repeated frequently during the snow. The summer amusements consist principally of concerts, evening walks, and rural festivals held in the vicinity of clear springs, and under the shade of odoriferous trees. On the latter I shall dwell in some future letter; at present I must conclude with the usual sentiments of attachment and regard.

LETTER IV.

The Subject of Emigration from Britain considered—History of an Emigrant Farmer—Kentucky peopled by a puffing Publication—Lord Selkirk's Colonizations—District least pernicious for Emigrants.

Pittsburg, November, 1806.

AS the portrait which I gave you in my last, of this town and its vicinity, might dispose some minds on your side of the water to emigration, it will be but fair and honest for me to consider that subject rather minutely, and shew you how far such a measure would tend to their happiness or otherwise. For this purpose, let us suppose an individual determined to abandon the land of his nativity, and to break the chain of early attachments and maturer friendships, to go—whither? To a country of which scarcely any but unfaithful delineators have written; to regions described by persons who meant to impose on the public, by giving lavish and flattering details of which they themselves

had only heard. One place is said to be "a paradise, where man enjoys the felicities of the golden age:" and another is represented as "a fit residence for gods." Alas! these are the reports either of travellers who conceive that they must not speak the truth, or perhaps of indigent writers who never were out of London. Such compositions are a kind of romance, intended to amuse, not to instruct; to please, but convey no intelligence: and this is the dangerous effect of an opinion, that the public taste would not endure a work destitute of false colouring and meretricious embellishments; and that an author adhering to the simplicity of truth, would be condemned as a gloomy pedant who represented nature in a dark disguise. To illustrate these observations, it may be useful to state a fact.

Only a few years have elapsed since a gentleman farmer, residing within three or four miles of Lewes, in the county of Sussex, began to entertain unfavourable notions of his country; and to believe that he was a mere slave, subject to the caprice of an arbitrary government. Perhaps you will suppose that a course of unmerited adversity had reduced him to poverty and distress, and thus given this unhappy turn to his thoughts; on the contrary, his farm was his own; it enabled him to support a large family, to enjoy the comforts and even luxuries of life, and the delight of performing acts of generosity among his relations and neighbours. Under what delusion then did he labour? That which arose from an extravagant admiration of the French revolution, and the French *patriots!* He extolled all that they did, and trusted to all they said. They declared that the people of England were not free, but in a state of infamous servitude: he believed this; and to amend his wretched condition, resolved to emigrate. He fixed on America as his destination; and to obtain all the necessary information for this purpose, bought up every publication which professed to describe that extensive country. He had before read every one that abused and censured his own; and even his children were familiar with Jefferson's flights on Independence, the blasphemies of Tom Paine, and the political reveries of Priestley. Thus equipped, thus admirably prepared for the completion of his project, he sold his stock and all his possessions, and embarked without any other regret than what he patriotically felt for the *calamities* and *degeneracy* of his countrymen.

You need not be told, that on leaving the land, and encountering storms and dangers of every kind, a variety of

recollections must have recurred to the minds of our emigrants, and torn their hearts with the anguish of recollected and endearing sympathies. Such must have been the state of their feelings till they arrived in sight of America, but these sensations were then diverted by a succession of new and unknown objects. They first saw land to the north-east of Portland, in the district of Maine; and then coasted along the shore to Boston in Massachusets. During this period, the father was anxiously looking for that prospect of fields and villages, that general shew of improvement and abundance, which his *reading* had instructed him to expect; but what was his surprise when he found that he could observe nothing but immense forests, covering an endless succession of mountains which penetrated to the interior of the country, and lost their summits in the clouds! He was not aware, that from the vast extent of America, the industry of man cannot for centuries effect a visible change in the general and primitive face which it bears. The improvements are but as specks scattered here and there, and can only be perceived by particular researches: the survey from a distance represents a continued immeasurable tract of woods, apparently occupied by beasts of prey, and incapable of affording accommodation to man.

This unexpected sight engaged and astonished him; nor were his reflections on it interrupted till he arrived in Boston harbour, where other scenes gave him fresh cause for wonder. A swarm of custom-officers were in an instant on board; and began their work of search, extortion, and pillage. Having escaped from these, and landed, he found himself surrounded by a number of persons who, without any kind of ceremony, crowded on him with the most familiar and impertinent inquiries: such as why he left England, whether he intended to settle among them, what were his means, what line of life he meant to follow, &c. One of them could let him have a house and store, if he turned his thoughts to merchandise: another could supply him at a low price, with the workshop of a mechanic, a methodist-meeting, or a butcher's shop, if either of these articles would suit him. Some recommended him to become a *land-jobber;* and to buy of them a hundred thousand acres on the borders of the Genessee country, and on the banks of *extensive* rivers and *sumptuous* lakes. This speculation was opposed by others, who offered him the sale of a parcel of *town-lots*, from which, by building on them, he could clear 500 *per cent.;* or if he had not means to build for the present, he

could cultivate the lots as cabbage-gardens, clear the first cost in a few years, and sell the whole at an advanced price! Finding, however, that none of their advice had any effect, these sordid speculators gradually dispersed; forming different conjectures of the stranger's intention, and lamenting that he was not simple enough to be made their dupe.

At length he reached a tavern; where he had not been long before a succession of swindlers and impostors intruded on his privacy, asked him a new set of questions, and harassed him with proposals varying according to the particular interests of the parties. If he had a desire to become a banker, he could purchase a share in a *capital house;* or he might buy a *land-lottery;* take a contract for building a bridge; place his funds in a manufactory of *weavers' shuttles;* buy up unpaid for British goods, twenty *per cent.* under prime cost; sell them by auction, and then buy a patent for making *improved fish-hooks*, and *cut iron nails.* As he did not approve of any of these plans, he was fortunately left to his little family: but not till his intruders gave him to understand that they suspected him to be a poor fellow without either money or spirit; and who came among them to become a schoolmaster, lawyer, parson, or doctor. "These professions," they added, "already abounded among them, but in the interior of the country he could not fail to succeed; and they hoped he would soon remove to those parts, as people of his kind were hardly held in repute among *them.*"

When they were again alone, his wife and himself could no longer suppress their astonishment and horror. One short hour had dispelled the reveries in which they had so long indulged, and changed the *liberal, independent, amiable* Americans, of whom they had read so much, into a race of impudent, selfish, sordid individuals, without either principle or common humanity. Still, however, he was not inclined to judge rashly of them; but deliberately to examine the country, and act from his own observations.

At last, after spending much of his time and property, his conclusions were these: that the high price of labour renders it impossible for a gentleman farmer to make any thing of land there; that no man can succeed on a farm unless he himself attends the plough, and has a wife and children capable of performing the other mean and hard work; that the market prices are too low to defray the expence of hired labourers, and that one of his own flocks of sheep in Eng-

land yielded a greater profit than any farm which he had examined or seen here. Taxes too, he found, were numerous and increasing; yet trade was unprotected, and persons and property were insecure. As to religion, he saw it in some parts established by a rigid ecclesiastical tyranny, compelling him to go to a church on a Sunday or pay a fine; and in others so much neglected and disregarded, that every house of worship was in a state of dilapidation and decay.

Unwilling to renounce the prejudice which had led him to prefer America to his own country, he travelled southward, passing through the malignant ordeals of the middle States: through the burning fevers which annually claim their thousands; and depopulate the great towns of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. He did not, it is true, find these dreadful scourges prevailing in the southern States, but he soon learnt that they too were regularly visited by periodical diseases. Slavery also reigned here; and consequently tyranny, sloth, avarice, and licentiousness.

He had now visited the whole of *settled* America; and at length awoke from those dreams in which he had so long indulged, and which ruined a considerable part of his fortune. His present reflections indeed were sound and salutary: they brought to his mind new ideas of his native land, and of its constitution. What he had seen in America, led him to recollect the undisturbed security and wealth which he once so eminently enjoyed at home. To change his own mild and paternal government, for the wild principles of the American federal system; to renounce the honour of being a British subject, for the degradation of becoming a citizen of *such* States; now appeared to him absurd and contemptible: he accordingly prepared with eagerness to return to his native home, and is at this moment the *tenant* on the farm which was originally his *inheritance*. And yet he is happy, because he now sees all the objects of his former discontent in a rational view. Tithes, which formerly excited his disgust and uneasiness, he now owns to be necessary (till some equivalent can be substituted in their stead) for the support of religious worship; the neglect of which, as he has strikingly seen in America, renders a country infamously licentious. Taxes he allows to be essential for securing public order, public wealth, and individual prosperity and happiness. He admits that commerce *must* be protected by a navy; and that foreign possessions, which

supply that commerce, *must* be maintained by a standing army: and concludes, that to expect riches and prosperity without taxes, is to expect the return of the fabulous golden age; a thing that may be wished even by the wise, but which fools themselves can never hope for.

Such is this gentleman's history! You will ask me why others do not follow his example; and when they find America contrary to their sanguine notions, return to their native home. I reply, that they either want means, or are deficient in strength of mind; that they either involve their fortunes in vague speculations from which they cannot retire, or fear to encounter the contempt and derision of their former acquaintance. Some are even so base as to write, in the midst of their disappointment, flattering letters for the purpose of enticing others to follow their steps (which must inevitably lead them into the same errors and calamities) only for the sake of having companions in misfortune and ridicule.

But a more powerful cause producing emigration is, that it becomes the business of those who make large purchases of land, to exert all their eloquence and other means for inviting people to settle on it. The first explorer of Kentuckey hired an author residing in Philadelphia, to write an animated and embellished description of that country. The narrative was in a florid, beautiful, and almost poetical style: in short, the work possessed every merit except truth. However, the land speculator succeeded: in the course of seven years, the book drew forty thousand inhabitants into that State; but this instrument of their delusion is now read only as a romance. Such were the views also which accomplished lord Selkirk's extensive colonizations: yet the first settlers nearly perished from want, owing to the general devastation of vermin destroying the seed before it took root in the ground; and the next fell victims to the flux and fevers, generated in the immense swamps on the lakes of the west. Priestley, under the same delusive influence, strengthened by his peculiar political and religious principles, settled in another inhospitable region; but he was soon obliged to draw a sad contrast between this and his native land: he fell into a deep melancholy, and died of a broken heart.

I cannot think it necessary to say much after this detail of facts. I ask you, could *you* dream of coming to this country, from so gloomy yet so *true* a representation of it? Though many of these facts do not operate against this town and its neighbourhood, still there are enough to deter me from encouraging any person to remove hither. But I do

not hesitate, however, to declare, that if a friend of mine were resolved on emigration, I would recommend these waters in preference to any place that I have seen east of the mountains; and as I have carefully travelled from Georgia to the district of Maine, you may depend on my opinion as possessing the advantages of experience.

LETTER V.

Morgantown—The Monongahela River—Cheat River, and George's Creek—New Geneva, and Greensburg—Brownsville—William's Port—Elizabeth Town—Mackee's Port, and Braddock's Defeat—An Indian fortified Camp described, and interesting Object discovered near it—Ancient Indian Barrows, or Burial-places—Remains of Arms, Utensils, and Instruments.

Morgantown, Pennsylvania, Nov. 1806.

THIS, which is a flourishing town pleasantly situated on the east bank of the Monongahela river, contains about sixty dwellings; and is a county town for the counties of Harrison, Monongahela, and Randolph. As it may be considered as at the head of the Monongahela navigation, I shall here give you a sketch of that river.

The Monongahela takes its rise from the foot of the Laurel-mountain, in Virginia: thence meandering in a direction west by east, it passes into Pennsylvania; receiving in its course Cheat and Yougheogheny rivers from the south south east, and many other small streams. It unites with the Alleghany at Pittsburg; and the two rivers, as I have before remarked, form the Ohio. The settlements on each side of it are extensive, and much of the land is good and well cultivated. The appearance of the rising towns and the regularly disposed farms on its banks, is truly delightful to passengers. In autumn and spring it is generally covered with what are here called trading and family boats: the former loaded with flour, whiskey, cider, apples, peach-brandy, bacon, iron, glass, earthen-ware, cabinet-work, &c. all being the produce and manufacture of the country, and destined for Kentuckey and New Orleans; and the latter carrying furniture, utensils, and tools for the cultivation of the

soil. No scene can be more pleasing to a philosophic mind than this: which presents to view a floating town, as it were, on the face of a river whose gentle rapidity and flowered banks add sublimity to cheerfulness; and the sweet harmony of the songsters of the woods, to the hoarseness of the falling cataract or the murmur of the quiet stream.

Eight miles below this town is Cheat river, the mouth of which is obstructed by a long and difficult shoal: a pilot should always be taken to guide a stranger through this. Twelve miles from this shoal, and on the east side, is George's creek: below the mouth of which is situated New Geneva, a thriving town, and distinguished for extensive manufactories in its vicinity, which make and export large quantities of good glass. Kentuckey and other boats are built here. A little below, and on the opposite side of the river, lies Greensburg; a small village, of which nothing favourable can be said.

Thirty-one miles from this last place is Brownsville, formerly called Redstone. This town is well known to those who *migrate* down the rivers. It is handsomely situated, but somewhat divided: a part lying on the first bank, but more on a second and higher one; both the banks being formed by the gradual subsidence of the water. It is a place of much business, and contains about a hundred houses and six hundred souls. The settlement round it is excellent, having some of the best mills to be found in the country; and among them an extensive paper-mill, which is the only one at this side of the mountains except that lately erected in Kentuckey. A variety of boats are built here; and an extensive rope-walk is carried on, with various other valuable manufactories. The inhabitants are principally German and Dutch; and this accounts at once for the wealth, morals, and industry of the place.

William's Port lies nineteen miles below Brownsville. The town is small, but well situated; and is increasing in business; as it has a fine settlement, and lies on the direct road from Philadelphia to Whulan on the Ohio, and other places of conveyance.

Beautifully situated, eleven miles further down the stream, stands Elizabeth Town; where considerable business is done in the boat and ship building way. A ship called the Monongahela Farmer, and several other vessels of considerable burthen, were built here; and, loaded with the produce of the adjacent country, passed from the midst of the mountains to the bosom of the sea, through circuitous fresh-water

streams that enrich provinces for an extent of nearly 2400 miles.

Mackee's Port, also pleasantly situated, lies eight miles still lower, and just beyond the junction of the Yougheogheny and the Monongahela. Many boats are built here; and on that account, *migrators* to the lower country generally choose this place for embarking. It is increasing in business, and indicates a likelihood to rise to some importance. A spot on the east side of the river, and eight miles from Mackee's Port, is called Braddock's Defeat, in commemoration of the melancholy destruction of that British general and his force by the Indians in the American war. Nine miles further down stands Pittsburg, which I have already described.

As I did not stop to interrupt my rapid sketch of this river by mentioning a variety of interesting particulars which occur on its banks, I shall now return to a few of them.

The neighbourhood of Brownsville, or Redstone, abounds with monuments of Indian antiquity. They consist of fortified camps, barrows for the dead, images and utensils, military appointments, &c.

A fortified camp (which is a fortification of a very complete nature, on whose ramparts timber of five feet in diameter now grows) commands the town of Brownsville, which undoubtedly was once an Indian settlement. This camp contains about thirteen acres, enclosed in a circle, the elevation of which is seven feet above the adjoining ground. Within the circle, a pentagon is accurately described; having its sides four feet high, and its angles uniformly three feet from the circumference of the circle, thus leaving an unbroken communication all round. Each side of the pentagon has a postern, opening into the passage between it and the circle; but the circle itself has only one grand gateway, which directly faces the town. Exactly in the centre stands a mound, about thirty feet high, hitherto considered as a repository of the dead; and which any correct observer can perceive to have been a place of look-out. I confess that I examined these remains of the former power of man with much care and veneration; nor could I resist reproaching those writers who have ignorantly asserted, "We know of no such thing existing as an Indian monument of respectability; for we would not honour with that name arrow-points, stone hatchets, stone pipes, half-shapen images, &c." I ask those writers, what opinion they entertain of

the object which I now describe: and I request them, when they are again disposed to enlighten the world with their lucubrations, to visit the countries which they profess to delineate; and diligently search for materials there, before they presume to tell us that such have no existence.

At an inconsiderable distance from the fortification, was a small rising ground; on the side of which I perceived a large projecting stone, a portion of the upper surface of which was not entirely concealed in the bank. If the perceptible portion of it had been marked with the irregular traces that distinguish the hand of Nature, I might have sat on this stone in silent meditation on the objects which it immediately commanded; but I conceived that the surface had that uniform and even character which exhibits the result of industry and art.

Animated by a variety of conjectures, I hastened to the town to engage assistance; and quickly returned to clear away the earth; which bore strong indications of having fallen on the stone, and not having primitively engendered it. In proportion as I removed the obstruction, I paused to dwell on the nature of the discovery: my heart beat as I proceeded, and my imagination traced various symbols which vanished before minute investigation. The stone was finally cleared in a rough manner, and represented to our view a polygon with a smooth surface of eight feet by five. I could not immediately form any conclusion, yet I persisted in the opinion that the hand of man had been busy in the formation of this object; nor was I diverted from this idea by the discouragement of the persons whom I employed, and the laughter of the multitude that followed me from the town to gaze on my labour and delight in my disappointment. Though the earth was now cleaned from the general surface of the stone, small quantities of it remained in certain irregular traces; and this I determined to remove before abandoning expectations which I entertained with so much zeal. I accordingly commenced this operation, to the no small amusement of the spectators, and with considerable anxiety: for none of the indentions traversed the stone in right and parallel lines; but they lay scattered without any apparent order, and I cherished the hope of decyphering a systematic inscription. With a pointed stick I followed the nearest indention, and soon discovered that it described a circle which completed its revolution at the spot where I had commenced clearing it. A ray of triumph now shone in my countenance: the people no

longer ridiculed me, but a silent expectation manifested a desire that I might be crowned with further success. On continuing, I cleared a right line which made a segment on the circle, though it did not touch the circumference at either end. I cleared in succession four other lines of this description; and the general view then presented a circle inclosing a regular pentagon, whose angles were two inches from the circumference. The multitude shouted applause: some of them even entered into the spirit of my design, and returned to their homes for water and brushes to scrub the stone. When this task was effected, there appeared a figure of the head of an Indian warrior etched in the centre. Each side of the pentagon was intersected by a small bar, and the circle was also cut by one bar immediately opposite to a right line drawn from the head of the man. Near each line were an equal number of little dots: and the circle was surrounded by many more; all uniform in their size, and in their distance from the circle and from each other.

The deductions from this very interesting spectacle, did not however give me the pride and delight that I ought to have felt; for in reality they destroyed my most favourite conceptions,—that the predecessors of the Indians were not only enlightened by the arts and sciences, but were a different sort of men from the present race, superior both in corporeal structure and mental endowment, and equal in the latter respect to the inhabitants of polished Europe. I was obliged to allow that the fact before my eyes abolished my theory entirely, for the representation on the stone was nothing more than a rude sketch of the adjoining fort which I have just described. The bars on the lines in the etching, designated the posterns and gateway; the dots denoted the length of the lines, and the extent of the circumference of the circle; and the warrior's head justified the opinion which I had entertained, that the mound in the centre of the fort was a place for a sentinel of observation. The etching is deep, and executed with considerable accuracy; yet the whole has an Indian air: the head is indelibly marked with savage features, and resembles many which the modern tribes carve on their pipes and tomahawks.

Two barrows or burial-places lie contiguous to the fort. I perforated them in many places, to discover whether the bones lay in positions which announced any particular religious or customary injunction; but could discover nothing on which to form an opinion with any certainty: though I was influenced by a tradition extant among the native In-

dians, that when their ancestors settled in a town, the first person who died was placed erect, and earth put about him so as to cover and support him; and that when another died, a narrow passage was dug to the first, against whom he was reclined, and the cover of the earth then replaced; and so on. Most barrows hitherto discovered have been of a spheroidical form, which favours this tradition. The one which I here opened, might have been originally a parallelogram, sixty feet by twenty, and thirty feet high, whose upper surface and angles have been rounded by the long influence of time and accident; for we are not to conceive that the form of ancient works is exactly similar to that which they first possessed. Such indeed as are built of stone, and have not been exposed to dilapidation, do not experience any material change: but all those monuments (and they are by far the most numerous) which are composed of earth, must have undergone considerable alteration and waste; and therefore afford a very scanty evidence of their original dimensions, or (except where bones are found) of their purpose.

The bones in the barrows of this neighbourhood were directed to every point, without any regard to system or order. This surprised me the more, as I am well convinced that in general, most of the ancient aboriginal nations and tribes had favourite positions for their dead, and even favourite strata with which to cover them; as I shall have occasion to explain to you when on the spot where the primitive Indian tribes resided. Perhaps the irregularities in the barrows of this place may arise from the bones deposited in them, having been those of persons killed in battle, and collected by the survivors in order to be buried under one great mound. This conjecture is the more probable, as there is abundant testimony that Indians dying naturally have been always interred with great pomp, and certain rites and positions existing to this day among them, which they are instructed to maintain by their most respected traditions.

At the same time and place I found in my researches a few carved stone pipes and hatchets, flints for arrows, and pieces of earthenware. I cannot take upon me to say that the workmanship of any of these articles surpasses the efforts of some of the present race of Indians; but it certainly destroys an opinion which prevailed, that the inhabitants in the most remote times had the use of arms, utensils, and instruments, made of copper, iron, and steel. The discovery

however of these objects mixed with the bones of the dead, proves the high antiquity of the custom of burying with deceased persons such things as were of the most utility and comfort to them in life.

LETTER VI.

Town of Erie—Description of the Alleghany River—Trade on it—Its Rise and Progress—Towns and other remarkable Places in its Course—Waterford, and Journey thence to Meadville—Bigsugar Creek, and Franklin—Montgomery's Falls—Ewalt's Defeat—Freeport—Sandy Creek—The Navigation of the Alleghany Dangerous—Bituminous Well—Alleged Virtues of the Water of the River—Onondargo Lake, and Salt Springs round it—Fondness of the Animals here for Salt—Buffaloes: interesting Narrative respecting the Destruction of those Animals—Destruction of Deer—Birds frequenting the Saline Waters:—Doves—Unhealthiness of the Climate, and Cautions on that Subject—The most Salubrious Situations—Details of the Manner in which the Commerce of the two Rivers is conducted—Immense Circuitous Journey performed by those chiefly engaged in it—Every thing done without Money—A Store described, and its Abuses:—Anecdote.

Erie, December,* 1806.

THIS town, at the head of a *portage*† communicating with the river (the Alleghany) which I mean in the present letter to describe, was a few years since *laid out* by direction of the legislature of the state of Pennsylvania. From a view of its important and commanding situation, it was planned on a very large scale; and every encouragement was given to settlers, in order to advance its progress. It now enjoys an extensive trade through the lakes; and this circumstance would render it of the highest consequence to the country, but for the fevers which check its population in a considerable degree.

* Formerly called Presqu'isle.

† An established communication by land, to a navigable water.

Few rivers exceed the Alleghany in clearness of water and rapidity of current. It seldom fails to mark its course across the mouth of the Monongahela, in the highest *freshes* or floods. This is easily observed by the colour of the water; that of the latter being very muddy, and the others clear. In high floods the junction of these rivers presents a pleasing view: the Monongahela flowing sometimes full of ice, but the Alleghany transparent and free. It is delightfully interspersed with cultivated farms and increasing towns on its banks, and bids fair to be settled from its mouth to its source. The trade up and down this river has become an object of much importance to the lower settlements; there being a great demand for flour, whiskey, apples, cider, beer, bacon, glass, iron, &c. at the different ports on the lakes, and among the inhabitants of the surrounding country. The quantity of salt which comes from Onondargo, in the state of New York, through the lakes, and thence down this river, is so immense as to be sufficient for the supply of all the western country.

The Alleghany rises near Sinemahoning Creek; a navigable stream that falls into Susquehanna, to which there is a portage of only twenty-three miles. Thence it meanders, receiving many tributary streams; and in about a south-westerly direction joins Monongahela at Pittsburg; where these two rivers lose their names, and together form the Ohio.

Waterford (originally called *Le Bœuf)* is fifteen miles from Erie: it was laid out by the state of Pennsylvania, and is now increasing. This is one of the western ports which were evacuated only a few years ago. In my way hence to Meadville, a distance of forty-two miles, I had to pass through the *Le Bœuf* Lake, Muddy Creek, and Dead-water: a passage void of any lively interest; and dangerous in respect to shallows, *rapids*, and stagnated vapours rising out of ponds near its banks and their immediate neighbourhood.

Meadville is pleasantly situated on French Creek: it is in a prosperous condition; and is a seat of justice for the counties of Erie, Warren, Venango, and Crawford, in the last of which it stands. This town carries on a considerable trade: it contains about fifty houses, and several stores.

The distance from Meadville to Bigsugar Creek and Franklin, is thirty miles. From the mouth of the creek there is a considerable fall, all the way to Franklin. That

town is seated just below the creek, where it joins the Alleghany; is a post-town, containing about forty houses and several stores; and is the principal place of Venango county. Twenty-five miles from it is a very dangerous spot called Montgomery's Falls. The channel of the river is on the left side of a large rock, directly in the middle of the falls; by keeping this in view, there is no danger; though the descent is rapid, and the boat difficult to steer. Three miles lower is a very rocky place, called Ewalt's Defeat: the channel is on the east side, near the shore. Thence to Freeport, a distance of eighty miles, the river is full of eddies, *ripples*, rapids, rocks, and other dangers, which it requires the utmost attention to avoid. In some of the ripples, the water runs at the rate of ten miles an hour; and a boat will go at the rate of twelve without any other assistance than the steering oar. Freeport lies at the mouth of Buffalo Creek, which falls into the river on the west; and opposite to it are received the waters of the Kiskeminetas. Sandy Creek is thirty-two miles from Freeport: at its mouth a vessel of 160 tons burthen was lately launched, filled with a cargo, and thence sailed for the West Indies. This creek is but ten miles distant from Pittsburg.

The river is interspersed with several small islands, which have a very pleasing effect: though they interrupt the navigation, and render it particularly dangerous at night; as the current has a tendency at times to cast a boat on the points of islands, and on the sand-bars which project from them. I could hear of but few objects of curiosity worth observing: I visited indeed the seat of some old Indian settlements, but did not find them distinguished by the fine features which characterize the ruins near Brownsville. Not far from Pittsburg is a well which has its surface covered with a bituminous matter resembling oil; and which the neighbouring inhabitants collect, and use in ointments and other medicinal preparations. This vapour rising from this well is inflammable; and has been known to hang in a lambent state over the orifice, being fed by fresh exhalations, for several hours together. The medical men of Pittsburg profess to have analyzed this oil; and to have discovered in it a variety of virtues, if applied according to their advice. They also extol the water of the Alleghany, and send their patients to bathe in it when the season permits; to this water is ascribed the faculty of strengthening weak stomachs, and aiding digestion. Those who are afflicted with habitual vomitings too (a complaint not uncommon here),

are said to find relief from drinking it. Such persons resort to Pittsburg for this purpose, and make a favourable report of the effects of their libations: though I am of opinion, that the amendment which they experience is to be attributed to their refraining from spirituous liquors, the primitive cause of their malady; and not to any peculiar virtue in this beautiful flood, which is supplied by effusions of melted snow from the mountains, and the waters of lakes, neither of which sources is by any means healthy.

The Onondargo, which (as I observed) has a portage-communication with this river, is a fine lake of brackish water, surrounded by springs, from two to five hundred gallons of the water of which make a bushel of salt. It appears as if Nature expressly intended this region to be populated; and, as a strong temptation, placed this treasure in the bosom of hills and woods. Had it not been for these and similar springs dispersed through the western country, salt must have been at such a price as to deter persons from settling there. All the animals of those parts have a great fondness for salt. The cattle of farmers who give this substance to their stock, prove superior in value by 25 per cent. to such as are not supplied with an article so essential, not only to their general improvement, but their health. The native animals of the country too, as the buffalo, elk, deer, &c. are well known to pay periodical visits to the saline springs and lakes, bathing and washing in them, and drinking the water till they are hardly able to remove from their vicinity. The best roads to the Onondargo from all parts, are the buffalo-tracks; so called from having been observed to be made by the buffaloes in their annual visitations to the lake from their pasture-grounds: and though this is a distance of above two hundred miles, the best surveyor could not have chosen a more direct course, or firmer or better ground. I have often travelled these tracks with safety and admiration: I perceived them chosen as if by the nicest judgment; and when at times I was perplexed to find them revert on themselves nearly in parallel lines, I soon found it occasioned by swamps, ponds, or precipices, which the animals knew how to avoid: but that object being effected, the road again swept into its due course, and bore towards its destination as if under the direction of a compass.

An old man, one of the first settlers in this country, built his log-house on the immediate borders of a salt-spring. He informed me that for the first several seasons, the buffaloes paid him their visits with the utmost regularity: they

travelled in single files, always following each other at equal distances; forming droves, on their arrival, of about three hundred each. The first and second years, so unacquainted were these poor brutes with the use of this man's house or with his nature, that in a few hours they *rubbed* the house completely down; taking delight in turning the logs off with their horns, while he had some difficulty to escape from being trampled under their feet, or crushed to death in his own ruins. At that period he supposed there could not have been less than ten thousand in the neighbourhood of the spring. They sought for no manner of food; but only bathed and drank three or four times a day, and rolled in the earth; or reposed, with their flanks distended, in the adjacent shades: and on the fifth and sixth days separated into distinct droves, bathed, drank, and departed in single files, according to the exact order of their arrival. They all rolled successively in the same hole: and each thus carried away a coat of mud, to preserve the moisture on their skin; and which, when hardened and baked by the sun, would resist the stings of millions of insects that otherwise would persecute these peaceful travellers to madness or even death.

In the first and second years this old man with some companions killed from six to seven hundred of these noble creatures, merely for the sake of the skins, which to them were worth only two shillings each: and after this "work of death," they were obliged to leave the place till the following season; or till the wolves, bears, panthers, eagles, rooks, ravens, &c. had devoured the carcasses, and abandoned the place for other prey. In the two following years, the same persons killed great numbers out of the first droves that arrived, skinned them, and left the bodies exposed to the sun and air; but they soon had reason to repent of this; for the remaining droves, as they came up in succession, stopped, gazed on the mangled and putrid bodies, sorrowfully moaned or furiously lowed aloud, and returned instantly to the wilderness in an unusual run, without tasting their favourite spring, or licking the impregnated earth, which was also once their most agreeable occupation, nor did they, or any of their race, ever revisit the neighbourhood.

The simple history of this spring, is that of every other in the settled parts of this western world: the carnage of beasts was every where the same. I met with a man who had killed two thousand buffaloes with his own hand; and

others, no doubt, have done the same. In consequence of such proceedings, not one buffalo is at this time to be found east of the Mississippi; except a few domesticated by the curious, or carried through the country as a public show. The first settlers, not content with this sanguinary extermination of the animal, also destroyed the food to which it was most partial; which was cane, growing in forests and brakes of immeasurable extent. To this the unsparing wretches set fire in dry seasons; in order to drive out every living creature, and then hunt and persecute them to death.

Deer, which also abounded in this country, have nearly shared the same fate as the buffaloes; and they too would be entirely annihilated, if they were not capable of subsisting in places almost inaccessible to man. The small number that remain, frequent the mountains: their desire for the water of the saline springs, however, occasionally brings them into the plains, where they do not want for enemies; there being no settler who would not abandon the most important business, in order to pursue this species of game. What was formerly common to all, in consequence of the multitude of herds daily passing backward and forward, can now only gratify a few; for they esteem the death of this fine animal a triumph, and neglect no opportunity of thus distinguishing themselves over their associates. On killing a deer, he is immediately skinned, even while yet palpitating; nor are the bowels taken out, lest the hide should shrink. The haunches alone are valued as food: the rest is either given to the dogs, or left for beasts of prey or vermin, which every where abound.

The salt lake and springs are also frequented by all the other kinds of beasts, and even by birds: and from the most minute inquiries, I am justified in asserting, that their visitations were periodical; except doves, which appear to delight in the neighbourhood of impregnated springs, and to make them their constant abode. In such situations they are seen in immense numbers, as tame as domestic pigeons, but rendered more interesting by their solitary notes and plaintive melody.

In descending the river, and traversing immense tracts of meadow and woodlands which are in a state of nature, I have found the atmosphere, after a hot day, so mephitic and offensive, as to give me vomitings and head-aches, which undoubtedly would have terminated in a yellow or intermittent fever, if I had not previously fortified my blood with bark and other preventives. I recommend the same precau-

tion to every person visiting this part of the world, and also to avoid studiously the night air. I have been wet with a dew so strong and palpable as to feel its effects for several days, in a general chill through my body, and a pain through particular bones. Yet in consequence of the violent heat of the day, people frequently defer their journies and most of their pleasures till the night; but a sad experience exposes the danger of the practice, in the strong language of rheumatism, consumption, and mental debility and distress.

You will ask me perhaps, what parts of the country in the neighbourhood of the rivers which I have described, are likely to secure the blessings of health. I answer at once, though in direct contradiction to various writers, that no part of the western country is healthy; and I have already detailed my motives for this assertion. For if the air is impregnated (as is undoubtedly the case) with a poisonous exhalation, so offensive to the constitution of the brute creation as to compel them to migrate several hundred miles annually in search of an antidote (which I conclude to be the real cause of their visits to the salt lake and springs), what must be its operation on man, whose organization is much more feeble; and whose blood, from the manner of his subsistence, is more subject to be polluted by the climate, and the various other elements of disease!

I allow that there are situations less dangerous than others; for hills and eminences are evidently more favourable than plains and valleys: yet the Americans universally build in valleys, and on *bottoms*, as they call them; which latter are plains formed by subsiding waters and from putrid ingredients, and subject to occasional overflows and partial stagnation. But this too can be accounted for: the borders of rivers and navigable streams are the theatres of business; and the Americans are too indolent to live on the high grounds, and to have the trouble of descending daily for the purpose of pursuing their avocations. They every moment see the consequences of this conduct; they see their friends fall off, their wives and children languish, and their own constitutions fail: still they persist; and prefer inactivity and disease to health and comfort, when the latter are to be purchased by exertion.

Before I leave the subject of these two rivers, I must give you some few particulars of the manner in which their commerce is conducted.

I do not conceive that I assert too much, though it may

be surprising to you, in saying, that the entire business of these waters is conducted without the use of money. I have already enumerated the produce; consisting chiefly of flour, corn, salt, cyder, apples, live hogs, bacon, glass, earthenware, &c. I have also mentioned the little towns and settlements along them. To such places persons come from Baltimore and Philadelphia with British goods, which they exchange for the above productions; charging on their articles at least 300 *per cent.* and allowing the farmer and manufacturer but very low terms for theirs. Some of these prices are as follows: whiskey, two shillings a gallon; live hogs, two dollars and a half a hundred weight; bacon, three dollars a hundred weight; flour, three dollars a barrel; corn, a quarter-dollar a bushel; butter, an eighth of a dollar a pound; cyder, four dollars a barrel; native sugar, a sixteenth of a dollar a pound; and so on in proportion, for any other produce of the country. The store-keepers make two annual collections of these commodities; send them down the rivers to New Orleans; and there receive an immense profit in Spanish dollars, or bills on Philadelphia at a short date. They then purchase British and West Indian goods of all kinds; send them by waggons, over the mountains, to their stores in the western country, where they always keep clerks; and again make their distributions and collections; descend the waters; and return by the same circuitous mountainous route, of at least 5650 miles, as nearly as can be calculated on an average between the extreme head of the waters and Pittsburg, thus:

	Miles.
From each station to New Orleans, - -	2300
From New Orleans to Philadelphia by sea, - - -	3000
From Philadelphia back to each station, by the way of the Alleghany mountains, - - - - -	350
Total, - - -	5650

A few, on receiving their cash at New Orleans, return by land through the wilderness, Tennasee, and Kentuckey, to their stations at and above Pittsburg; but this is seldom done. The distance which is thus performed is only 1300 miles.

These storekeepers are obliged to keep every article which it is possible that the farmer and manufacturer may want. Each of their shops exhibits a complete medley: a magazine where are to be had both a needle and an anchor, a tin pot and a large copper boiler, a child's whistle and a piano

forte, a ring-dial and a clock, a skain of thread and trimmings of lace, a check frock and a muslin gown, a frieze coat and a superfine cloth, a glass of whiskey and a barrel of brandy, a gill of vinegar and a hogshead of Madeira wine, &c. Hence you will perceive that money is not always necessary as a circulating medium: however, as farmers and manufacturers advance in business, and find their produce more than equal to the wants of their families, they contract with the storekeeper to receive the annual balance of the latter either in cash, or in land to an equal amount; for though no person cultivates a tenth part of the land that he possesses, every one is animated with the rage of making further accessions. Thus the great landholders ultimately absorb all the hard money; and as they principally reside in the large towns in the Atlantic States, the money finds its way back to those, and leaves many places here without a single dollar. This is productive of distressing incidents to small farmers who supply the markets with provisions: for whatever they have to sell, whether trivial or important, they receive in return nothing but an order on a store for the value in goods; and as the wants of such persons are few, they seldom know what articles to take. The storekeepers turn this circumstance to advantage, and frequently force on the customer a thing for which he has no use; or, what is worse, when the order is trifling, tell him to sit down at the door and drink the amount if he chooses. As this is often complied with, a market-day is mostly a scene of drunkenness and contention, fraud, cunning, and duplicity; the storekeeper denying the possession of a good article, till he fails in imposing a bad one. I have known a person ask for a pair of shoes, and receive for answer, that there were no shoes in the store, but some *capital gin* that could be recommended to him. I have heard another ask for a rifle-gun, and be answered that there were no rifles, but that he could be accommodated with the best *Dutch looking-glasses* and *German flutes* in the western country. Another was directed by his wife to bring her a warming-pan, smoothing-irons, and scrubbing-brushes: but these were denied; and a *wooden cuckoo-clock*, which the children would not take a week to demolish, was sent home in their stead. I could not help smiling at these absurdities, though I believe they deserve the name of impositions, till an incident reduced me to the condition of those whom I have just described. I rode an excellent horse to the head of the waters; and finding him of no further use, from my

having to take boat there, I proposed selling him to the best bidder. I was offered in exchange for him, salt, flour, hogs, land, cast-iron salt-pans, Indian corn, whiskey,—in short, every thing but what I wanted, which was money. The highest offer made, was cast-iron salt-pans to the amount of a hundred and thirty dollars. I asked the proprietor of this heavy commodity, how much cash he would allow me instead of such an incumbrance: his answer was, without any shame or hesitation, *forty dollars* at most. I perferred the pans; though they are to be exchanged again for glass bottles at Pittsburg, become tobacco or hemp in Kentuckey, and dollars in New Orleans. These various commercial processes may occupy twelve months; nor am I then certain of the amount, unless I give 30 *per cent.* to secure it.

The words *buy* and *sell* are nearly unknown here; in business nothing is heard but the word *trade*. "Will you trade your watch, your gun, pistols, horses? &c." means, "Will you change your watch, gun, &c. for corn, pigs, cattle, Indian meal? &c." But you must anticipate all this from the absence of money.

LETTER VII.

Traces of a General Deluge—Other great Natural Phenomena, difficult to be accounted for—Peculiar Wonders of the Vegetable and of the Fossil Kingdom—List of Native Plants, classed into Medicinal, Esculent, Ornamental, and Useful—Vegetable Products of the Earth—Important Inquiries and Suggestions concerning some of them—Abundance of Vegetable and Mineral Productions here, which might be turned to great Account, if properly explored—American Warriors: Statesmen: and Debates in Congress: Divines, Lawyers, Physicians, and Philosophers—Buffon's Assertion correct, that both Man and inferior Animals degenerate in America.

Pittsburg, January, 1806.

BEFORE I leave this place, it may be interesting and profitable to take a general survey of the face of the country, and to describe some of its primitive productions.

That Moses gave an account worthy of credit, of the

primeval state of the globe, this part of the world fully demonstrates. It abounds in irresistible proofs of a general deluge, of a miraculous effusion of water from the clouds and from the great abyss: or such an effusion may possibly have originated from the great Southern Ocean; running, from interruptions, a south-east course, and driving every object before it to the north-west; where it deposited remains now entirely unknown, or appertaining to regions at a distance of several thousand miles. Whether we inspect the plains, penetrate the cavernous mountains, or climb their broken sides, the remnants of organized bodies are every where found, buried in the various strata which form the external surface of the earth. Immense collections of shells lie scattered or sunk around, and some on elevations of fifteen thousand feet above the present level of the sea. Fishes are frequently found in the veins of slate, and all kinds of vegetable impressions occur at heights and depths equally astonishing. Trees of different sorts, and various plants, are found in the greatest depths or on the loftiest mountains, mixed with marine remains. Trees have also been deposited on the summits of mountains, where, from the degree of cold which prevails there, they could not now possibly grow; therefore they must either have grown there at a time when the temperature of these summits was warmer, by being less elevated above the sea, or have been deposited there by its inundations. It appears by the general face of the country, that the retreat of the sea was gradual. Large plains of different and successive elevations, a uniformity and regularity in the strata, and a variety of other circumstances, indicate the departure of the waters to have been governed by a cause whose action was regular, uniform, and long continued. Hence numerous objects which are now viewed as curious exotics, might have been indigenous at the period of a milder clime. This idea is justified by our knowledge of the effects of elementary conflicts in other situations. The country near Ararat is now unfit to bear the olive-tree, as it did* when the Caspian and Euxine seas were joined: the soil having been since chilled by its distance from the sea, and having suffered from the absence of matter with which it was accustomed to be impregnated.

Independently of the appearance given to this portion of the globe, by the progress of the invasion of the waters from the great abyss, and their subsequent retreat, it presents

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*Genesis, chap. 8, verse 11.

features which must have been the result of causes difficult to be accounted for. These features manifest themselves in the extraordinary character and form of the mountains: in the beds of the rivers, which are not excavated by the constant flow of their water, but seem rent asunder (as it were) to give them instant passage; and by other phenomena which must have proceeded from violent earthquakes; igneous fusion; or elementary fire (the principle of heat coeval with the creation of matter) acting upon metals, sulphur, carbonic and bituminous substances, and thus occasioning vast eruptions which split the face of the earth, and gave it eccentric and new characters. Huge rocks cast from off the summits of hills, make room for lakes; entire ridges of stony mountain separate, and yield a passage to the pressing floods; immense caverns resound beneath the feet; and Nature, in disorder, chaos, and confusion, seems pleased to exhibit stupendous monuments of her power, the principles of which she has endowed us with faculties to comprehend.

This country, in consequence of its high antiquity, the immensity of its mountains, and the impossibility of its being affected by the violation and ravages of man, presents a field extremely favourable for the investigations of philosophy and the discoveries of truth. Here, free from any artificial garment, Nature is exhibited in her primitive state. The first productions of the earth were probably the winter mosses: they are here in such variety of form, that they hardly yield to herbs in number; and though extremely minute, yet of so admirable a structure, that nothing can excel them in beauty or variety. These mosses are dried up in summer; but in winter revive, and serve for the food of deer and other animals. The widely disseminated herbs, flowers, and fruits, also decorate the earth in the most charming manner. Trees grow here to an excessive magnitude; and by weaving their branches together, defend the ground from excessive heat and cold, and afford shelter to animals against the injuries of the weather. The hills, vales, and caverns, also supply numerous subjects for contemplation. There may be seen the laborious and unremitted *industry* of the fossil kingdom: the manner in which water deposits clay; how it is crystallized into sand near the shore; how it wears down shells and other substances into chalk, dead plants into vegetable mould, and metals into ochre; from all which matter, according to certain laws of nature, stones are formed. Thus from sand originates whetstone; from mould, slate; from chalk, flint; from shells and earth, marble; and from

clay, talc. In the cavities of these are formed concrete pellucid crystals; which, consisting of various sides opposed to each other, compose a number of regular figures, and emit brilliant and prismatic colours. Here also may be, *in formation*, ponderous and shining metals; iron in abundance; some lead; silver; and even the ductile gold, which eludes the violence of fire, and can be extended in length and breadth to a most astonishing degree. It is said that the magnet too has been found here; the magnet, respecting which no mortal has hitherto been able to learn the secret law of its mutual attraction with iron, or of its constant inclination to the poles. None of these metals, however, except iron, are found in such quantity, or are so common, as to be worth the labour of search; but mineral coal abounds so generally, that an opinion prevails, that the whole tract between the Laurel-mountain, Mississippi, and Ohio, would yield it in the greatest plenty. The mountain immediately opposite to this town is principally composed of coal, from the base to the summit. It is worked with little comparative trouble, about half-way up; and rolled down to boats which lie below for its reception. It is of a very superior quality, and costs the citizens about twopence halfpenny a bushel.

As I do not conceive it interesting to you to receive a complete catalogue of trees, plants, fruit, &c. I shall only sketch out those which principally attract notice, as being, 1. Medicinal; 2. Esculent; 3. Ornamental; 4. Useful; adding (from Mr. Jefferson's list) the Linnean to the popular name. I confine myself to native plants.

Medicinal.

Popular Name.	*Linnean Name.*
Senna.	Cassia Ligustrina.
Arsmart.	Polygonum Sagittarum.
Clivers, or Goose-grass.	Galium Spurium.
Lobelia, several sorts.	
Palma Christi.	Racinus.
James's Town Weed.	Datura Stramonium.
Mallow.	Malva Rotundifolia.
Syrian Mallow.	Hibiscus Moschentos.
	Hibiscus Virginicus.
Indian Mallow.	Sida Rhombifolia.
	Sida Abutilon.
Virginia Marshmallow.	Napæa Hermaphrodita.
	Napæa Dioica.

Popular Name.	*Linnean Name.*
Indian Physic.	Spiræa Trifoliata.
Euphorbia Ipecacuanha.	
Pleurisy Root.	Asclepias Decumbens.
Virginia Snake Root.	Actæa Racemosa.
Seneca Rattle-snake Root.	Polygala Senega.
Valerian.	Valeriana locusta radiata.
Gentian.	Gentiana, Saponaria, Vellosa, et Centaurium.
Ginseng.	Panax Quinquefolium.
Angelica.	Angelica Sylvestris.
Columbo Root.	
Tobacco.	Nicotiana.

Esculent.

Tuckahoe.	Lycoperdon Tuber.
Jerusalem Artichoke.	Hebanthus Tuberosus.
Long Potatoes.	Convolvulus Batatas.
Granadellas.	Passiflora Incarnata.
Panic.	Panicum, many species.
Indian Millet.	Holcus Laxus.
Wild Oat.	Zizania Aquatica.
Wild Pea.	Dolichos of Clayton.
Lupine.	Lupinus Perennis.
Wild Hop.	Humulus Lupulus.
Wild Cherry.	Prunus Virginiana.
Cherokee Plumb.	Prunus Sylvestris fructu majori.
Wild Plumb.	Prunus Sylvestris fructu minori.
Wild Crab Apple.	Pyrus Coronaria.
Red Mulberry.	Morus Rubra.
Persimmon.	Diospyros Virginiana.
Sugar Maple.	Acer Saccharinum.
Scaly-bark Hickory.	Juglans Alba, cortice Lyumoso. C.
Common Hickory.	Juglans Alba, fructu minore rancedo. C.
Paccan, or Illenois Nut.	Unknown to Linnæus.
Black Walnut.	Juglans Nigra.
White Walnut.	Juglans Alba.
Chesnut.	Fagus Castanea.
Chinquapin.	Fagus Pumila.
Hazel Nut.	Corylus Avellana.
Grapes.	Vitis, various sorts.

Popular Name.	*Linnean Name.*
Scarlet Strawberries.	Fragraria Virginiana.
Whortleberries.	Vaccineum Uliginosum.
Wild Gooseberries.	Ribes Grossularia.
Cranberries.	Rubus Oxycoecos.
Black Raspberries.	Rubus Occidentalis.
Blackberries.	Rubus Fruticosus.
Dewberries.	Rubus Cæsius.
Cloudberries.	Rubus Chamæmorus.
Maize.	Trea Mays.
Round Potatoes.	Solanum Tuberosum.
Pumpkins.	Cucurbita Pepo.
Cymlings.	Cucurbita Verrucosa.
Squashes.	Cucurbita Melopepo.

Ornamental.

Plane Tree.	Platanus Occidentalis.
Poplar.	Lerisdendron Tulipifera.
Black Poplar.	Populus Nigra.
Yellow Poplar.	
Aspin.	Populus Tremula.
Linden, or Lime.	Tilia Americana.
Red flowering Maple.	Acer Rubrum.
Horse Chesnut.	Æsculus Pavia.
Catalpa.	Bignonia Catalpa.
Umbrella.	Magnolia Tripetala.
Swamp Laurel.	Magnolia Glauca.
Cucumber Tree.	Magnolia Acuminata.
Portugal Bay.	Laurus Indica.
Red Bay.	Laurus Barbonia.
Dwarf-rose Bay.	Rhododendron Maximum.
Laurel of the western country.	Many species.
Wild Pimento.	Laurus Benzoin.
Sassafras.	Laurus Sassafras.
Locust.	Robinia Psuedo-acacia.
Honey-locust.	Gleditsia.
Dagwood.	Cornus Florida.
Snow Drop.	Chionanthus Virginica.
Barberry.	Buberis Vulgaris.
Red Bud, or Judas Tree.	Cercis Canadensis.
Holly.	Ilex Aquifolium.
Cockspur Hawthorn.	Cratægus Coccinea.
Spindle Tree.	Euonimus Europæus.
Evergreen Tree.	Euonimus Americanus.

Popular Name.	*Linnean Name.*
	Itea Virginica.
Elder.	Sambucus Nigra.
Papaw.	Annona Triloba.
Candleberry Myrtle.	Myrica Cerifera.
Dwarf Laurel.	Kalmia Angustifolia.
Ivy.	Hedera Quinquefolia.
Trumpet Honeysuckle.	Lonicera Sempervirens.
Upright Honeysuckle.	Azalia Nudiflora.
Yellow Jasmine.	Begnonca Sempervirens.
	Calythanthus Floridus.
American Aloe.	Agave Virginica.
Sumach.	Rhus. many species.
Poke.	Phytoloca Decandra.
Long Moss.	Tellandsia Usneoides.

Useful, for fabrication.

Reed.	Arundo Phoagmitis.
Virginia Hemp.	Acneda Cannabina.
Flax.	Lenum Virginianum.
Black, or Pitch Pine.	Pinus Tæda.
White Pine.	Pinus Strobus.
Yellow Pine.	Pinus Virginica.
Spruce Pine.	Pinus Foliis Singularibus. C.
Hemlock Spruce Fir.	Pinus Canadensis.
Arbor Vitæ.	Thuya Occidentalis.
Juniper.	Juniperus Virginica.
Cypress.	Cupussus Disticha.
White-Cedar.	Cupussus Thyoides.
Red Cedar.	
Black Oak.	Quercus Nigra.
White Oak.	Quercus Alba.
Red Oak.	Quercus Rubra.
Willow Oak.	Quercus Phellos.
Chesnut Oak.	Quercus Prinus.
Black Jack Oak.	Quercus Aquatica.
Ground Oak.	Quercus Pumila.
Live Oak.	Quercus Virginiana.
Black Birch.	Betula Nigra.
White Birch.	Betula Alba.
Beach.	Fagus Sylvatica.
Ash, several species.	Fraxinus Americana.
Elm.	Ulmus Americana.
Willow, several species.	Salix.
Sweet Gum.	Liquidambar Styracifera.

There are numerous plants, flowers, &c. which I have omitted: you will find a scientific account of them in the Flora Virginica of the celebrated Dr. Clayton, published at Leyden, in 1762.

After this enumeration, it is unnecessary to tell you that the farms of the country produce wheat, rye, barley, oats, buck-wheat, broom-corn, Indian corn, &c. This neighbourhood also cultivates hemp, flax, and hops; but is not favourable to cotton, indigo, rice, or tobacco. Those articles, however, are to be had down the Ohio, and are brought hither at an expence of about two-pence *per pound.* All kinds of vegetables and fruit grow in great luxuriance; the former especially are superior to those of Europe; but in consequence of the high price of labour, and the little attention paid to so interesting a branch of rural economy, they are not quite so cheap.

Much has been written and said respecting the arrack-tree: may it not be the same as the American cocoa; or perhaps rather the sugar-maple; which for many years successively yields a large quantity of rich sweet sap, whence a fine sugar is made and spirit is distilled? It also might be worth inquiry, whether the cotton of the country, which is different from that raised in the islands, be not the same as that of which the Chinese make their fine calicoes and muslins. It might be ascertained whether the common Indian hemp be not the same as the Chinese herba; and whether the silk gathered on the trees in China, be any other than the cocoons which are to be found in great plenty in many situations here on trees and bushes. The manufactured silk of the Chinese appears to be of different sorts, from which it is likely that they have different species of silk-worms. In this country, more to the southward, various sorts of cocoons are found on trees and shrubs, but those on the mulberry are the best: the cocoons of some of them, particularly such as feed on the sassafras, are large; and the substance which they produce, though not so fine, is much stronger than that of the Italian silk-worm. Thus, in my opinion, there is reason to believe, that if experiments were made with these indigenous silk-worms, and if such as are most useful were propagated, this country might produce abundance of silk.

Here are also many trees, plants, roots, and herbs, to the medicinal virtues and uses of which we are total strangers. It is perhaps true, that the fruit of the presemmon tree has been used in brewing of beer; but it is hardly known

that one bushel of this fruit will yield above a gallon of proof spirit, of excellent quality and flavour. To what other uses in pharmacy the gum, bark, and roots of this tree, which are very astringent, may be applied, the public is also ignorant. The virtues of the magnolia, calalpa, and spice-wood, whose odours extend several miles, are not sufficiently ascertained, though they have been used by the Indians, who consider them as excellent remedies in several disorders. There is another tree called the zanthoxelum, the bark of which is of such a peculiar quality, that the smallest bit of it, on being chewed, stimulates the glands of the mouth and tongue, and occasions a flow of saliva equal to that of a salivation, while its action continues, and yet no rational experiments have been made to ascertain the advantages to be derived from such extraordinary properties. A variety of other trees might be mentioned, such as the sassafras, the wild cinnamon, the magnolia altissima, whose fragrant smell and aromatic taste, prove that they possess medicinal qualities with which we are unacquainted. The sumack likewise requires examination. Perhaps its seed or berries, if not the wood itself, might be used in dying. The Indians mix its leaves with their tobacco, to render it odorific and pleasant in smoaking. There is a species of it which yields a gum, that nearly, if not exactly, resembles the gum copal. Indeed, there is reason to believe it is the very same.

Wines and raisins are imported from foreign parts at an extravagant price, while nature points out that few countries can be more proper than this for the production of the grape. Where lands are not cleared and the grape-vines not extirpated, it is impossible to resist observing and admiring the quantity which those natural vineyards present to the view. Farther down the Ohio, in the Indian territory and elsewhere, hills, vales, and plains, exhibit them in luxurious abundance. They grow spontaneously in every soil, and almost every climate in America; yet they are neglected, or unskilfully encouraged on a small scale.

It would be endless to recount all the other articles of the vegetable kingdom which are not investigated, though, with a little care and attention, they might become articles of commerce, and be of infinite use to the country. I must mention one plant, a native of this place, and which grows in many places, known commonly by the name of Indian hemp. Its bark is so strong, that the Indians make use of it for bow-strings. Could a method be found for separating

and softening its fibres, so as to render it ductile and fit to be spun into thread, it might serve as a substitute for flax and hemp. This plant deserves to be cultivated on another account: the pod it bears contains a substance, that, from its softness and elasticity, might be used instead of the finest down. Its culture is easy, inasmuch as its root, which penetrates deep into the earth, survives the winter, and shoots out fresh stalks every spring. With the roots of plants, nearly unknown to us, the Indians stain wood, hair, and skins, of a beautiful colour, and which preserves its lustre for years, though exposed to all extremes of the weather. With the juice of herbs they relieve many diseases, heal wounds, and cure the bite of the most venomous snakes. A perfect knowledge of these simples, and of many others with which this country abounds, might be of great utility to mankind. Perhaps they are in as great abundance here as in China. The resemblance is manifest in the weather, the climate, and possibly in the soil and produce. Tobacco, phitolacca, the presemmon tree, the mulberry, with several others, are natives of China as they are also of most parts of America. Ginseng is gathered to the westward of Pekin, and has not been found in any other part of the world, except within the same degrees of latitude in this country, where ship-loads may be had at a short notice. These observations give grounds to believe, that, if proper inquiries were made, many more of the native plants of China, and very possibly, the tea, so much in use, and now become so necessary a part of diet, might be found in America.

Nor are the bowels of the earth sufficiently explored, notwithstanding the great encouragement received from the few experiments which have been made. There is here a great variety of clays, many of them so valuable as to induce a hope that, in time, porcelain, equal to that brought from China, may be manufactured at home. The lands to the S. W. are so replete with nitre that, in various places, it appears like a hoar frost on the surface of the ground, and it is known that there are mines of saltpetre in the mountains. Besides the minerals I have mentioned, I have seen specimens of tin, antimony, bismuth ores, and many others, the nature, use, and properties of which are not sufficiently ascertained. What you have heard of the country originates from the narratives of hunters, the reports of ignorant travellers, and the dreams of persons who never left their native homes. Whereas it richly merits, that a society of learned naturalists should visit it, under the pa-

tronage of government, explore with care, analyze with skill, and return enriched with useful knowledge and profitable erudition, derived from the great book of Nature, and not from uncertain information, or false hypotheses.

From these remarks concerning the riches yielded by its soil, I shall make rather an abrupt transition to what should rank as the far nobler produce of America, its inhabitants: I now speak only of its civilized parts, the United States; but on this subject, alas! it may be said with the greatest truth:

"Man is the only growth that dwindles here."

You may perhaps have heard so much of great American warriors, statesmen, politicians, churchmen, lawyers, physicians, astronomers, &c. that you are astonished to hear any one bold enough to dispute the fact. I say the fact, because in my correspondence with you, you may have already perceived my determination of making no general assertion, but such as I can establish by actual evidence and decisive testimonies. I know of no great warriors in America. I cannot honour by that name even the men who overwhelmed a handful of British, and after several years combat obtained an unprofitable victory. In like manner I have known a shoal of herrings run down a whale on the coast of Cornwall, but it did not follow that I was to attribute this accident to the *individual prowess* of *any* of such contemptible animals, or to the absence of strength and capacity in the whale. This is so just a picture of the American war and its close, that I hasten to the statesmen of whom your papers speak so much: and who are they? I admit there are two in the country; the one, after many years of public life devoted to a democratic party, had the good sense again to become an apostate to monarchy, though he might have predicted that it would occasion his fall from the head of the government, and expose him to the most intemperate abuse of the jacobinical faction. He met these events soon after with a manly fortitude, and Mr. John Adams, now leads a private life, beloved by the admirers of good sense, and sound and practical political economy. There is no doubt but that he is the first statesman in America, for I trust you do not mean me to distinguish by that name, the swarm of politicians who clog the wheels of the government, and who affect that they alone are competent to the direction of national affairs. The next statesman to

Mr. Adams, is Mr. Jefferson. This gentleman has more theoretical talent than sterling political ability. And yet, to shew some respect to the cry of the world, I call him a statesman, though he certainly has betrayed more dereliction and tergiversation than ought to be accorded to so high and eminent a name. During the whole of his two presidencies, he has been fluctuating between the interests of his country and his prejudice and attachment to the French government. The remains of good sense and the *loud* admonitions of others, have at length prevailed, and though he continues his affection to the Gallic cock, still he ceases to hate and bully the British lion. There are in America no real politicians; the speeches you see in papers are made by Irish and Scotch journalists, who attend the congress and senate merely to take the spirit of their proceedings, and clothe it with a language interesting to read. Attending the debates of Congress on a day when a subject of consequence was to be discussed, I left the house full of contempt of its eloquence, and the paucity of talent employed for the support or condemnation of the question. Notwithstanding this, I read in the next morning's gazette, "that a debate took place in the house last night, of the most interesting nature; that it was agitated by all the talent in the country, —particularly by Messieurs Dayton, Morgan, Otty, and Dawson, whose brilliant speeches we lay before the public." Here followed certainly eloquent orations, a sentence of which never passed in the house. I had the misfortune to attend the congress at another time, when the scene was more noisy and turbulent than at any of your electioneering hustings.—A Mr. Lyon, of Vermont, now of Kentuckey, not being able to disprove the arguments of an opponent, spit directly in his face: this the other resented, by running to the fire and catching up a hot poker, and in a short time nearly killed his opponent, and cleared the house. I suppose this is sufficient on this head; from it you can readily learn that the congress is a violent, vulgar assembly, which *hired* persons attend, to debate on state affairs, and that the public newspapers are conducted by foreign editors, who amplify such debates, and give them something of a polished and interesting character.

Nor has the church any brighter ornaments than the state. The members of it have no conception of eloquence. Mr. Smith, of Prince Tower College, has the highest reputation as a divine and orator. I went to hear him preach, and

had the mortification to find a transposed sermon of Blair, delivered in a strain of dull monotony.

As the exposition of all law, and pleading of all facts is confined to the province of attornies, I was not surprized to find a want of ability and eloquence in that department. The late general Hamilton, a West Indian by birth, was the first attorney, and pleaded in America. The celebrated Mr. Burr was his rival at the bar; and since the death of the former, and retreat of the latter, a Mr. Livingstone and a Mr. Emmet, alone enjoy repute.

The physicians of eminence are very few. Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, and Wilson, of New York, monopolize all the character in the country, of a medical nature; and yet the yellow fever rages and carries off their annual thousands, though these gentlemen have written themselves into the name of infallibility itself. There is no profession in America, so shamefully neglected as that of physic, or more destitute of able practitioners.

As to the department of science, I am told that there has been a Franklin and a Rittenhouse; the former shone in electricity, and the latter constructed an orrery on true principles. I will allow this; I have no disposition to detract from the merits of such gentlemen, but I cannot admit that these two instances, after the mediocrity of genius, are sufficient to justify Mr. Jefferson, in saying that America is the most *enlightened country in the world*, and that M. Buffon was guilty of a gross error, when he asserted that man and beast degenerated in America, and became in time, inferior to those of Europe. M. Buffon was perfectly right in his assertion and principle, but wrong in the proof he adduced. Mr. Jefferson took advantage of this error; all his followers have taken his ground, and nothing is heard through the whole union, but "America is the most enlightened nation in the world." This cry has spread abroad; is believed at home, and M. Buffon is condemned. This is the natural fate of flattery and truth—Mr. Jefferson is held up as a great statesman and profound philosopher, while M. Buffon is held in contempt as a prejudiced reasoner, jealous of the pride and honour of the quarter of the globe which gave the former birth! The reflections likely to arise in your mind out of this, I shall not interrupt.

LETTER VIII.

General Views of the River Ohio, and its Beauties: its Advantages: its Course: its Islands: its Depth and Navigation: its Obstructions might easily be removed.—Advice to Persons wishing to descend the Ohio.

Wheeling, Virginia, on the Ohio, April, 1806.

YOU will perceive, much to your satisfaction, that I have left Pittsburg, whence I sent you so many tedious letters, and am about to descend the Ohio.—Before, however, I commence that river's minute details, I must give you its general description.

The Ohio commences at the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela rivers, and there also commences its beauty. It has been truly described as, beyond competition, the most beautiful river in the universe, whether it be considered for its meandering course through an immense region of forests; for its elegant banks, which afford innumerable delightful situations for cities, villages, and improved farms; or for those many other advantages which truly entitle it to the name originally given it by the French, of "*La belle riviere.*" This is the outline of a description given several years since, and it has generally been thought an exaggerated one. Now, the immense forests recede, cultivation smiles along its banks; numerous villages and towns decorate its shores; and it is not extravagant to suppose, that the day is not far distant, when its whole margin will form one continued series of villages and towns.

The reasons for this gratifying supposition are many: the principal ones are, the immense tracts of fine country that have communication with the Ohio by means of its tributary navigable waters; the extraordinary fertility, extent, and beauty of the river-bottoms, generally high, dry, and productive; and the superior excellence of its navigation, through means of which the various productions of the most extensive and fertile parts of the United States must eventually be sent to market.

At its commencement at Pittsburg, it takes a north-west course for about twenty-five miles, then turns gradually to west-south-west, and pursuing that course for about five hundred miles, winds to the south-west for nearly one hundred and sixty miles; then turns to the west for about two

hundred and sixty miles; thence south-west for one hundred and sixty, and empties into the Mississippi in a south-east direction, about eleven hundred miles below Pittsburg, and nearly the same distance above New Orleans, in lat. 36° 43′ north.—It is so completely serpentine, that in several places a person taking observations of the sun or stars, will find that he sometimes entirely changes his direction, and appears to be going directly back; but its general course is south, sixty degrees west. Its width is from five hundred to fifteen hundred yards; but at the *rapids*, and near the mouth, it is considerably wider.

The numerous islands that are interspersed in this river, add much to the grandeur of its appearance, but they very much embarrass the navigation, particularly in low water, as they occasion a great many shoals and sand-bars. The soil of those islands is, for the most part, very rich, the timber luxuriant, and the extent of some of them considerable. Where fruit trees have been planted, they are found to thrive, to bear well, and seldom fail of a crop. Indeed this is the case wherever fruit trees have been tried on the river bottoms, the soil of which is very similar to that of the islands, though not quite so sandy.

In times of high freshes, and during the effusion of ice and snow from the Alleghany and other mountains, vessels of almost any tonnage may descend; and it is never so low but that it may be navigated by canoes and other light craft, not drawing more than twelve inches water. The highest floods are in spring, when the river rises forty-five feet; the lowest are in summer, when it sinks to twelve inches on the bars, ripples, and shoals, where waggons, carts, &c. frequently pass. Many of the impediments, however, which are to be met with when the water is low, might in a dry time be got rid of, and at no very considerable expence: at least the expence would be by no means beyond the advantages which would accrue from the undertaking, if properly managed. Rocks, that now during the dry season, obstruct or render dangerous the large flat bottomed, or what are called Kentuckey boats, might be blasted; channels might be made through the ripples; and the snags, and fallen timber along the banks, entirely removed.

These improvements, together with many others that might be enumerated, must undoubtedly, sooner or later, be carried into effect, as they are a national concern of the first importance. In the mean time, some general instructions respecting the present navigation, and which I have collected

from the most experienced watermen, will be found useful to those who may hereafter propose descending the river, and who are unacquainted both as to the manner this voyage is to be undertaken, and with the nature and channel of the different rivers. Do not let it be said notwithstanding, that I mean to encourage any person to follow my steps, or to reside on these waters. I repeat, that the *parts* of the river's banks, *favourable* for towns, villages, farms, &c. are without exception, unhealthy—exposing all descriptions of inhabitants, especially new comers, to annual visitations of dysentery, flux, pleurisy, and various species of intermittent fevers. This is to be expected of rivers which experience such extraordinary and great vicissitudes; at one period sufficient to carry a first rate man of war, and at another, barely capable of floating a canoe; at one period running at seven miles an hour, and at another nearly stagnate in an unruffled bed.

The first thing to be attended to by emigrants, or traders, wishing to descend the river, is to procure a boat, to be ready so as to take advantage of the times of flood, and to be careful that the boat be a good one; for many of the accidents that happen in navigating the Ohio and Mississippi, are owing to the unpardonable carelessness and penuriousness of the boat builder, who will frequently slight his work, or make it of injured plank; in either case putting the lives and properties of a great many persons to manifest hazard. This egregious misconduct should long before this time have been rectified, by the appointment of a boat inspector at different places on the Monongahela. But as this has never been done, it belongs to every person purchasing Kentuckey boats, which is the sort I allude to, to get them narrowly examined before the embarkation, by persons who may know a little of the strength and form of a boat suitable to a voyage of this kind. He must also remember this, that a boat destined for the Mississippi, requires to be much stronger timbered, and somewhat differently constructed, from one designed only to descend the Ohio.

Flat-bottomed boats may be procured almost every where along the Monongahela river, and in some places on the Youghiogheny; very few are as yet built on the Alleghany, as the chief places of embarkation are confined to the Monongahela and Ohio. Keel-boats and vessels of burden are also built at Brownsville, Elizabeth's-town, and many other places on the two last mentioned rivers.

The best seasons for navigating the Ohio are spring and

autumn. The spring season commences at the breaking up of the ice, which generally happens about the middle of February, and continues good for about three months. The autumn generally commences in October, and continues till about the first of December, when the ice begins to form. But the alternations of high water can scarcely be called periodical, as they vary considerably, according to the wetness or dryness of the season, or earliness or lateness of the setting in, or breaking up of winter. The winter of 1802 was even an exception to every other, the Monongahela not having been closed at all with ice, so that there was nothing to impede the passage of boats into the Ohio, &c. This circumstance is the more extraordinary, the winters in general being very severe, some of which a few years past, kept the rivers blocked up for more than two months at a time. The cause of these sudden and great changes may usefully occupy the philosophic mind.

Nor are freshes in the rivers entirely confined to the spring and autumn: it does not unfrequently happen that a considerable quantity of rain falls in the Apalachian ridges, whence the rivers and creeks that supply the Monongahela proceed, during the summer months; a swelling of the currents of the Alleghany and other rivers, sometimes also happens, and occasions a sufficient supply of water during the same period to render the navigation of the Ohio perfectly eligible. These rains, or freshes, however, are not to be depended on, and when they occur, must be taken immediate advantage of, as the waters subside rapidly.

When provided with a good boat and strong cable of at least forty feet long, there is little danger in descending the river in high freshes, using due precaution, unless at times when there is much floating ice. Great exertion with the oars is at such times, generally speaking, of no manner of use: in fact, it is rather detrimental than otherwise, by often throwing the boat out of the current in which she ought to continue, and which will carry her along with more rapidity, and at the same time always take her right. By trusting to the current there is no danger to be feared in passing the islands, as it will carry the boat by them in safety. On the other hand, if persons row, and by so doing happen to be in the middle of the river, on approaching an island, there is great danger of being thrown on the upper point of it before they are aware, or have time to regain the true current. In case they get aground in such a situation, become entangled among the aquatic timber,

which is generally abundant, or be driven by the force of the water among the *tops* or trunks of other trees, they may consider themselves in imminent danger; and nothing but *presence of mind* and great exertion can extricate them from such a dilemma.

Persons should contrive to land as seldom as possible: they need not even lie by at night, provided they trust to the current and keep a good look out. When they bring to, the strength of their cable is their principal safeguard. A quantity of fuel, provisions, and other necessaries, should be laid in at once, and every boat should have a skiff or canoe alongside, to land on shore when necessary.

Though the labour of navigating this river in times of fresh is very inconsiderable to what it is during low water, when continual rowing is necessary, it is always best to keep a good look out, and be strong handed. The winds sometimes drive boats too near the points of the islands, or on projecting parts of the main shore, when considerable extra exertion is necessary to surmount the difficulty. Boats most commonly meet with head winds, as the river is so very crooked, that what is in their favour one hour will probably be against them in the next, and when a contrary wind contends with a strong current, it is attended with considerable inconvenience, and requires careful and circumspect management, otherwise the boats must be driven on shore in spite of all the efforts of their crews. One favourable circumstance is, that the wind commonly abates about sunset in summer.

Boats have frequently passed from Pittsburg to the mouth of the Ohio in fifteen days. However, twenty days is a good spring passage. In summer, six, eight, and even ten *weeks* are often required to effect the same voyage.

Descending the river when much incommoded with floating ice, should be as much as possible avoided, particularly early in the winter, as there is a great probability of its stopping the boats: however, if the water be high, and there be an appearance of open weather, they may venture, unless the cakes of ice be so heavy as to impede their progress, or injure their timbers;—the boats will in such case make more way than the ice, a great deal of which will sink, and get thinner as it progresses; but, on the other hand, if the water be low, it is by no means safe to embark on it when any thing considerable of ice remains.

If at any time boats are obliged to bring to on account of the ice, great circumspection should be used in the choice

of a spot to lie in. There are many places where the shore, projecting to a point, throws off the flakes of ice towards the middle of the river, and forms a kind of harbour below. By bringing to in such a situation, and fixing the canoe above the boat, with one end strongly to the shore, and the other out in the stream, sloping down the river, so as to drive out such masses of ice as would otherwise accumulate on the upper side of the boat, and tend to sink her and drive her from her moorings, a boat may lie with a tolerable degree of safety. This is a much better method than that of felling a tree on the shore above, so as to fall partly into the river; for if in its fall it does not adhere in some measure to the stump, or rest sufficiently on the bank, the weight of accumulated ice will be apt to send it adrift, and bring it down, ice and all, on the boat, when no safety can be expected from it; nor any means of extrication from so great a dilemma.—The reflection here naturally occurs, how easy it would be, and how little it would cost, in different places of the river where boats are accustomed to land, to project a sort of pier into the water, which inclining down the stream, would at all times ensure a place of safety below it. The advantages accruing from such projections, to the places where they might be made, would be very considerable, bring them into repute as landing places, and soon repay the trifling expence incurred by erection. There is however no hope that any improvement of this kind will take place at least for a number of years, as the inhabitants of the present settlements and towns, appear to have delighted in rendering their landing places difficult, by felling the timber on the banks into the river, and by not leaving as much as a shrub to which a boat can be made fast. The settlements themselves frequently suffer by this their shameful prodigality and want of foresight, as boats on making them, and not finding an immediate fastening and safe landing, drop below the settlements, never again to return: for it would take a flat boat and forty hands ten days to make good five miles against the stream. You must understand from the stress I have laid on the necessity of a fastening on shore, and a good landing place, that flat boats never carry an anchor. The method to run the boat ashore is, jump hastily out, and fasten a line or cable round a stump, tree, &c.; or hold on till a stake be cut and driven in the ground for the same purpose.

Observing the Ohio from Pittsburg, and remarking in the

mind its general course, it is bounded on the *right hand side* in this manner:

1st, Part of the state of Pennsylvania, extending about fifteen miles down the river.

2dly, The whole southern boundary of the Ohio state, formerly called the North-west Territory. This state extends along the river about five hundred miles.

3dly, The Indiana territory extends to the mouth of the Ohio, making five hundred and fifty miles more along its banks; which added to the two former numbers, make the entire course about eleven hundred miles.

Observing the river under the same circumstances from Pittsburg, it is found to be bounded on the *left-hand;*—

1st, By part of the state of Pennsylvania, extending forty-two miles down the river.

2d, By part of Virginia, extending two hundred and ninety-six miles along a high shore; and

3d, By the state of Kentuckey, which extends to the mouth seven hundred and sixty-two miles, and forms the entire distance of eleven hundred miles or thereabouts.

The recapitulation of this is, that the right-hand side of the Ohio is bound by Pennsylvania, the Ohio state, and the Indiana territory: and these provinces, or their proper proportions of them, are bounded on the north by the lakes and by the British possessions in Canada; on the south, of course, by the Ohio river: on the west by the Mississippi; and on the east, by parts of Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New York.

The *left-hand* side of the Ohio is bounded by Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentuckey; and these provinces, or their proper proportion, are bounded on the south by the Carolinas, Georgia, and Tenessee; on the north of course by the Ohio river; on the west by the Mississippi; and on the east by the Atlantic seas.—On a map, these general boundaries would naturally have to undergo modifications, and be divided into particular bearings and points. By stating them as I have, I only mean to give you a general idea of them. This great river contains near one hundred islands, and receives as many rivers, creeks, or navigable streams.

In my next I shall examine them step by step. That they may afford you information and amusement, is my most ardent wish; but you must be patient, and bear with my usual wide digression and extraneous matter.

LETTER IX.

Proper Season to descend the Ohio—A Monongahela, or Kentuckey Boat described—Confluence of the Monongahela and Alleghany waters—Sublime Scenery—Hamilton's Island—Irwin's Island—Difficulties in the Course—Hogs' and Crows' Islands—Macintosh's Town—Warren's Town—Young's Town—Grape Island: its Inhabitants: Cause and Manner of their Settlement: its Grape-vines—George Town—A Spring producing an Oil similar to Seneca Oil: Experiments to discover its Cause: Deductions from them.

Wheeling, Virginia, April, 1806.

I LEFT Pittsburg just before the waters had entirely subsided. The winter broke up about the tenth of February, since which time, the flood has been seeking the sea with an unwearied assiduity. I might have taken advantage of its first force, but I declare to you, fond as you may think me of diligence and enterprise, I have no fancy to be dragged by day down the river, by force, nor to bring to against the trunks and in the tops of trees, from night till morning: this is the fate of all those who depart on the immediate dissolution of the ice; on they must proceed, and often in spite of every exertion, or bring up in situations wild, dangerous, and inhospitable. Being conscious then of all the disagreeable circumstances attending those who hurry away with the earliest floods, I waited till this season, when the waters run a little more than three miles an hour, allowing a boat, with small exertion, and not meeting a head wind to make between forty and fifty miles in a day of twelve hours.

This town, which is ninety miles from Pittsburg, I reached on the evening of the second day. The water in some places was very shallow, and in others rocky and dangerous. But I believe I promised you to be minute: let me then make a complete beginning. I purchased for forty dollars on the Monongahela a Kentuckey boat. I must describe such a thing to you, for it is no more like an English boat of any description than it is like a church. An oblong frame is first made perhaps forty feet long by sixteen wide. The four pieces forming this frame are generally from fourteen to eighteen inches square, mortised so as to receive a number of bars across, on which are fastened

thick planks with wooden pins—this forming the flat bottom of the boat. From the solid beams of the frame rise several uprights six feet high, to which boards are attached to form the ends and sides; after which the boa is roofed over, except a small space through which the hands can drop or enter. The whole represents an oblong apartment —both ends perfectly square, and nothing indicates the bow but the small open space in the roof, and holes in the sides, through which the oars work. Boats of this sort are steered by a large oar balanced on a pivot, issuing from the middle uprights of the stern. This is preferred to a tiller, which, by sinking too deep in the water, would risk being carried off by logs and shoals. I divided my boat into two apartments; that next the stern for my own accommodation; that next the head for my servants to cook, row, and keep a look out in: the roof served for the helmsman, and as a quarter-deck, on which to parade. When I add to this, that I had a good chimney built in my boat; four windows made; that I laid in two coopful of chickens, other kinds of stores, spirits, coffee, sugar, &c. I need not tell you how comfortable I set off, and how able I was to endure the vicissitudes of my intended voyages. My servants were Mindeth, my old follower, and Cuff, a mestee, of the Bandan nation; the former a strong laborious creature; the latter a fellow without any other character than that he knew something of the waters, was a good shot, and well acquainted with haunts of wild turkies, game, and beasts. I could have got another hand, for fifteen dollars a month; but as I was determined to steer myself, and be active in other respects, I departed with but two men. I cannot recommend this temerity to others: four hands are always necessary, and sometimes more.

In turning into the stream from Pittsburg I found the scene instantaneously changed, and become peculiarly grand. In ten minutes I got into the confluence of the Monongahela and Alleghany waters. For half an hour I steered my boat in this confluence, being able to dip up whitish water on one side and perfectly green on the other. The hills on the right hand were near twelve hundred feet high—those on the left something less lofty—each clothed with sumptuous and unceasing timber from the base to the summit, the garb of many thousand years; each tree perishing in an imperceptible progression, and each as imperceptibly renewed! The whole and the individual still appearing the same, always conveying a grand idea of the

munificence of Nature, and the immutability of all her works. This view was sufficient to lead the mind into a serious contemplation which assumed a character of melancholy, when I reflected on the endless scenes of the same nature, only more pregnant with danger, vicissitude, and death, through which I had to pass. The river, for nine hundred miles, with the exception of a few intervals, chosen in general for the seats of towns, villages, and farms, is bounded by lofty banks and high mountains, which shed a gloom on its surface, and convey less of pleasurable sensation than that of sublimity and surprize. I reflected, too, that I was lengthening the chain of all my former friendships; that I was to pass through countries where death attacked man in a variety of new and alarming shapes; that I was proceeding to New Orleans, a city two thousand two hundred miles off, where fate uniformly demands nine out of ten of every visitant; and that, should I escape this destiny, I should still be six thousand miles from home, and have, in that distance, to meet with other numerous dangers, presenting themselves under every form that could manifest a terrific appearance. A small immediate difficulty put a quick conclusion to these gloomy meditations. We had dropt down near three miles when an island appeared a-head—the channel was on the right side, and the wind, from that quarter, had set me too much to the left. I instantly put the boat's head across the river, and with infinite exertion of oars gained the true current; but not till the water changed colour, indicating soundings of three feet on the bar which stretched out of the head of the island. I had to learn from this the necessity of moralizing less, and of keeping a better look out. It was Hamilton's island, which I was passing at the rate of seven miles an hour.—The island, by contracting the breadth of the channel, gives more impetuosity to the current, and forces a boat along with double its rapidity in the ordinary and open parts of the river.

Four miles from Hamilton's island, and seven from Pittsburg, is Irwin's island. The channel is about one-third from the right hand shore. The first ripple is just below the head of the island, where I had to leave a large breaker, or rock, close to my right hand. The second, or Horse-tail ripple, is a small distance below the first, and the channel, which is not twice the length of the boat, lies between a bar and some large breakers. The third ripple is within half a mile of the lower end of Irwin's island; the channel is about

one-third of the width of the river from the right side, and close to the upper end of the bar. From this to a little town called Macintosh, I met with a series of these ripples, which required the most exact look out, and two islands called Hogs' and Crows' island, the former on account of its acorns inviting the periodical visits of hogs, and the latter from being perceived to be the favourite resort of rooks and crows. I cannot think that you would conceive it of any profit or pleasure to receive from me my exact notes of the causes, &c. of the river and channel, I shall therefore content myself with transmitting you such remarks as may have something of interest above the contents of communications meant as a mere pilot to the river. I neglect this detail the more willingly, as I understand "a Pilot for the rivers" is now in the press, and will shortly be published at Pittsburg. Thus are we relieved from the necessity of much dull detail.

Macintosh is situated on the right side of the Ohio, about a quarter of a mile below Big Beaver creek; the situation is beautiful and commanding, as there is at present a considerable, and in some time must be a very great trade up and down this creek, the sources of which nearly reach the borders of lake Eric. The town is increasing rapidly, and contains many *stores*, where the merchants exchange their goods for the produce of the back country, whose market is New Orleans or the isles. Fifty miles in the interior of this place, and on the bank of Mahoneny creek, the town of Warren is pleasantly situated. Fourteen miles below, on the same creek, is Young's town, a small place, but said to be progressing rapidly.

Just below Macintosh, which is twenty-eight miles from Pittsburg, is an island called after the same name, a second island not named, and a third called Grape island. On this last I landed, and soon discovered the propriety of the name: the passage through it in every direction was rendered intricate, by the multitudes of vines, which extended from tree to tree, rising to the tops of some, and closely embracing the bodies of others. Having passed through a great deal of toil during the day in avoiding a variety of danger, I was very well pleased to make the pretence of curiosity a motive to myself, for stopping the remainder of the day and night in this little tranquil insulated world. I no sooner made this intention known, than all was bustle among us. The men with joy took to their oars: we soon gained the bank, and made fast to a tree, which bade defi-

ance to the impotent though constant efforts of the current. The next step was to make "an encampment." Take care that you are not misled by this high sounding term. Formerly, indeed, the making an encampment, in this country, bore affinity to the notions you attach to that act at home: it was for the purpose of protection against Indians and wild beasts; but now it consists of nothing more than clearing a spot on which to make a large fire; stretch a blanket or piece of cloth on two bent poles to windward, and there make a shew of comfort, satisfaction, and repose. This done, we each had his separate employment. Mindeth commenced preparations for dressing dinner, Cuff patiently sat on the side of the boat catching fish, and I took my gun and dog into the woods. I pierced to the left side of the island, a beautiful portion of which I found cleared, planted with Indian corn, and very promising wheat. A neat loghouse soon appeared in view: I knocked; the door was opened by an old woman, about whom hung three children, the whole emaciated by sickness, and stained by the languid colours of death. They betrayed more fear than surprise on beholding me. I banished this impression as soon as possible, by persuading the mother that I did not come to rob the house, or do her any manner of injury; that I was not a Kentuckey man, and that mere chance, not a disposition to plunder, brought me her way. On this she assumed some serenity, and told me that the Kentuckey men so often landed on her island to steal her fruit, fowls, hogs, &c. that she was alarmed at the sight of others, from an apprehension of their coming with the same design. The husband, who soon after came in, I found to be a German, who had lived long enough in Virginia to pick up some Negro-English. He informed me, that coming down the river four years past in his family boat, for want of keeping a good look out, or of knowing the river, he took the wrong channel, and stove his boat within two hundred yards of the spot where his house now stands. The water being shallow he got his goods ashore, and thinking the island possessed as good land as any he could procure elsewhere, he determined to proceed no farther, but to pitch his tent where Providence had cast him, and set with a good heart about building a loghouse, and clearing ground for maize, in the first instance, and then for wheat and other objects of agriculture. He effected this laborious purpose to admiration. His house was comfortable; his garden neat; and he had six acres of land under a crop which appeared perfectly

thriving. He had bought a male and female pig, which had multiplied in the woods prodigiously, and nothing appeared to interrupt his happiness but *the people of Kentuck*, as he called all those who occasionally made a descent on his island, either to pursue game or to injure him. Robinson Crusoe never stood in more dread of an Indian invasion than this poor German did of his own fellow-citizens and inhabitants of a neighbouring state. It was this apprehension it seems which hindered him from making his settlement on the channel side of the island, which, under any other impression, would be infinitely superior; more eligible for market, and more interesting and convenient to the pleasures and comforts of life. In fact, he explained to me his motives in fewer words: they were precisely these: "If the people of Kentuck find me out sometimes in this silent part, how should I be able to live when the sight of smoke, the crowing of cocks, and the barking of dogs would call them all upon me?" Having no manner of reply to make to this argument, I invited the philosopher to my boat, and by the way conversed with him on the subject of the vines, on which I wanted information. I learned that they bore a small sour fruit, growing in clusters of from two ounces to three pounds. The fruit was not eatable, nor calculated to have good wine expressed from it. He imagined that this evil was owing to the vines growing under large trees, which entirely deprived them of the heat of the sun. Under this influence he transplanted some roots into his garden-field; on the second year they produced a fruit not quite so small as that in an uncultivated state; on the third year the grapes looked much better, but before they could ripen they were withered and exhausted by the heat of the sun. I told him that a medium between extreme shade and exposure appeared the thing to be desired. He said he believed so too. The argument was not pursued: I hurried him to my encampment, where I found prepared an excellent dinner, or rather a supper, for the sun but faintly glimmered on the tops of the highest trees of the opposite mountain, and the silent serenity of evening reigned in the place of the glare of the day. My new acquaintance was much pleased with his treatment and repast. I gave him a good glass of grog, and sent him home with a small present for his wife of tea and sugar;—articles on which people, in proportion to their distance from such luxuries, set an increased value. I never asked him why he himself looked so poorly, or why his wife and children were so afflicted with indisposition. The

reasons were too evident, to make it necessary to touch a string which could vibrate nothing but discord.—Excessive perspiration from continual labour, and exposure to rain and nightly dews before the completion of the house, hurt the constitution of this poor couple, and the regular periodical fevers which visit them, are hastening them and their children to an early dissolution.—Were it not for this, who would not envy them the monarchy of their little island; the tranquillity of their lives; and the innocence of their pursuits!

The night advanced rapidly, and with it a pleasing impression of seriousness, unknown to any but those who are exposed to dangerous events, and who like me are used to live and sleep under the open air. Cuff seemed determined to augment this disposition, by reciting various stories of accidents happening on the waters; of murders committed; robberies perpetrated; of whirlpools, cataracts, and rapid falls, &c. &c These dismal narrations had the good effect of awaking in our minds a remembrance of obligation to heaven; a desire to merit a continuance of mercy; and a disposition to cast ourselves on the bounty of a Providence which had hitherto accorded so many kind interpositions. If such sentiments as these have been found favourable to happiness in the bosom of society, and in the midst of safety and ease, you may judge how much more useful and necessary they are when exposed to danger on the surface of waters, or in the depth and borders of gloomy woods. This effect on me was a perfect composure, and an uninterrupted night's rest. I laid a bear-skin on the sand, put my saddle-bags under my head, and placing my feet to the fire, there remained till the morning; when the clamour of rooks, and melody of birds of various kinds, rebuked my sluggishness. Cheerful and refreshed, we cast off our fastening; jumped into our boat; in ten minutes gained the strongest stream, and in ten more arrived at George town.

George town is a small but flourishing place, just above the mouth of Mill creek. It is pleasantly situated on a very high bank. A post-office has been lately established there.

Nearly opposite to George town, and a few yards from the shore, a spring rises from the bottom of the river, which produces an oil nearly similar to Seneca oil. I conjecture that this must proceed from a large bed of mineral coal in the vicinity of the spring. On first hearing of this, from an intelligent Scotchman, the postmaster at George town, whom

I questioned as to the curiosities of his neighbourhood, I immediately crossed over in my canoe to examine the well, and search for grounds on which to establish some particular conclusions. I found none perfectly satisfactory. The surface, about four feet in diameter, was covered over with an olive-coloured slime, here and there rising in lobes, filled, but not agitated, with confined air. On a more minute inspection, however, I perceived these globules burst and subside in gentle undulations, enclosing in a circle a matter whose colour was less deep than that prevailing on the general face of the well. On discovering other globules to rise in succession, I gently dipt up a gourdful of water and globules, while in the act of rising through the surface. I spilt the whole on the blade of the paddle, and could distinguish very plainly the oil which had been exposed to the air from the oil which just rose in search of it. On sounding I found the well to be sixty-five feet deep; that is, as deep as the bed of the adjacent river. On examining the neighbourhood it was plain that coal abounded; but I could not take upon me to assert that the well or its sources had any communication with that or any other mineral. As a last act, I skimmed off a gourdful of oil, and again crossing the river, went to the house of a doctor, whom I supposed capable of analyzing the subject for me. On seeing my gourdful of oil, and the interest I took in the investigation of its properties, he very handsomely told me, that "*he had but just turned doctor; and had not as yet given his time to such things.*" My admiration of his candour covered him from contempt, and I returned to my Scotch friend, more full of the dangerous idea of a man but "just turned doctor," and let loose on a sickly world, than I was of my gourd of oil, or the consequence of the discovery of its virtues to mankind. I did not however abandon the pursuit. Assisted by the highlander's wife, I exposed the oil to slow fusion, a quick boil, and finally set it on fire. Its emotion while over the fire was uncommonly great, and when entirely separated from watery particles, it caught fire, it consumed in a blaze more lively and sudden than that which hovers over spirits of ordinary proof, when inflamed. During the progressive stages of this operation I kept the noses of all the obliging family occupied over the fume. Owing to a difference in the construction of that organ, or a variation in the sensibility of the olfactory nerve, no two of them gave the same opinion as to their notion of the effluvia. Indeed their opinions were wide and discordant, agreeing but in this essen-

tial point that there was no smell of sulphur. This accorded with my idea, though it traverses that which I first gave, "that the oil proceeded from a bed of mineral coal." The effluviæ to me, not only appeared divested of sulphur, but to be impregnated with a vegetable aromatic smell. Though by no means content with the result of my researches, I still draw from these their deductions.

1st, The oil rising in a distinct intermittent globule from the bottom to the surface, proves, that it does not issue in a continued stream from any rock or mineral strata, but that it is emitted drop by drop, in the manner of slow and reluctant distillation.

2dly, The oil is not therefore generated by the sun from particles rising in the water, favourable to that liquid, though the sun changes its colour on exposure of its rays.

3dly, This change of colour from a light yellow, to a dark olive, betrays a sulphurous quality, yet the absence of the smell and taste of that mineral, entirely discountenances the opinion that it exists in it. And,

4thly, From the spirit residing in the oil, the aromatic flavour and smell, it is not unreasonable to presume, that it possesses medicinal virtues, which, under a judicious administration, might be productive of salutary effects.

This latter deduction is strengthened by the testimony of the Scotchman, who says the well was much frequented by the Indians, previously to their retreat to the back countries, and that the neighbouring whites used the oil as a friction when suffering with rheumatism, and as an unction when afflicted with sores.

Much to the satisfaction of the good hostess and her family, who could not refrain from laughter at my zeal and earnestness, on a subject to them "signifying nothing," our gourd and nostrums were pitched out of doors, and they sat about preparing a repast, to which I got a most hearty and welcome invitation. This gives you a most favourable respite, and me another opportunity of persuading you how much I am, &c.

LETTER X.

Course of the Ohio to Stubenville—Custard Island—Stubenville—Congress Lands—Indian honourable Confederacy—Insidious means of ill disposed Whites to possess the Country, and exterminate its Inhabitants—The Indians become undeceived, and resume the great Federal Tomahawk—They put to death many of their cruel Invaders, who place themselves under protection of Congress, and receive its support—Events of an Indian War—Peace restored—its Terms—Finesse of Congress to possess the Indian Lands—Hence arose the North-west Territory, now the Ohio State—The subject of Congress Lands continued—Nature of their Sales, and price of these Lands—Their great profit to Land-jobbers—Increase of Population of the State—A Dutch Purchaser, his Sentiments after Experience.

Stubenville, State of Ohio, May, 1806.

I LEFT Georgetown on the evening of the day I informed you I was to dine with the hospitable post-master, and gained this place, nineteen miles, in four hours, but not without a good look-out and some exertion at the oars. I should have told you, that the Pennsylvania line crosses at the mouth of Mill creek, and a little below the mouth of another creek called Little Beaver. This line separates that state from Virginia on the left hand, and the Ohio state on the right, when descending the river, and gives Pennsylvania a length of territory from the Atlantic to this line, of near five thousand miles! I passed this afternoon by five islands, lying from two to three, or four miles from each other; covered with wood, and overrun with flowers and fine pasture. One was called Custard Island, in consequence of its abounding with the papaw, which is vulgarly known by the name of the Custard tree. The fruit of the papaw when ripe, exactly resembles in taste the flavour, composition, and colour, a custard of the best quality. It may be eaten in moderation without danger. There is one circumstance, however, attending this fruit, of a very remarkable nature. Man, and many other animals, eat it with safety and pleasure, whilst a hog, the most ravenous, and least circumspect of all creatures, turns from it with antipathy, or a fear of

danger. This is one of those subjects whose depth is too great to be fathomed by human intelligence.

Having arrived late at Stubenville, I made secure my boat against a steep bank, and clean shore, and went up to the town with the view of passing the night, and gaining some knowledge of the surrounding country.

The town is pleasantly situated on the right bank of the river, and in the Ohio state. A land office is kept here for sale of Congress lands, which brings a number of purchasers, and at times makes a considerable appearance of activity. I must explain the expression of "Congress Lands."

Little more than twenty years have elapsed, since the whole of the right bank of the Ohio was called the Indian Country, or the Indian Side. It was inhabited by the remains of several scattered aboriginal nations, who, driven from their former grounds, were in hopes of being left in the peaceable possession of this country. To this effect they buried the tomahawk of enmity which subsisted between each other; the calumet of peace was sent from camp to camp, and from tribe to tribe. A social compact was the immediate consequence, and the world witnessed the new spectacle, of a savage association formed on political principles, and organized with a wisdom and energy, which would honor the first states of Europe. Individual and national animosities were forgotten. A general and national council was formed of warriors, and *talkers*, from the councils of the particutar tribes, and this council assumed the name of "The High Council of Confederated Indians." The debates of this instructive assembly, principally turned on the propriety of cultivating a warm friendship with the whites, and on the necessity imposed on them, by the limits set to their hunting grounds, of learning the social arts, and of devoting themselves to the pursuits of agriculture and commerce. These were the intuitions of this primitive people. The discontented and vagabond part of the United States saw this confederacy with a malignant eye. The idea of Indian policy, or savage association, productive of moral and public happiness, was a thing too insufferable to be endured by those who were taught to believe the Indians little inferior to brutes, and who delighted in their extermination. Besides, it was whispered abroad, that "the Indian country" was the finest work in the world; that Imley's dreams applied to it alone, and that the French, who had visited it from the Canada border, considered it as the paradise of the new world. This was more than sufficient to inspire a

disposition to possess this charming territory, and to annihilate its inhabitants. The whites in the adjacent parts of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentuckey, commenced this work of premeditation and death; not by open violence, but by a means much more fatal, that of proffered friendship, and a shew of conciliation and amicable spirit. They set distilleries to work, and, backed by the destructive instrument of ardent spirits, and furnished with some coarse blankets, matchlocks, beads, and baubles, for sale, they visited their unsuspecting friends, who sold them their possessions in exchange for this poison and trumpery, and by degrees, retired from their favorite waters, into the bosom of the deepest woods. So ignorant were they of the value of their landed property, and so high an estimation did they set on the infamous spirits brought among them by their perfidious friends, that whole tribes have been known to sell the rights of their nations to lands, of upwards of two hundred thousand acres, for as much whiskey as could intoxicate them at one great public festival, or even feast, of warriors and chiefs. Seduced by the success of the first speculators, a host of adventurers crowded in from all parts, who, getting bold in proportion to their numbers, they began to seize on lands, without the shallow pretext of an impositious purchase, and drove the Indians from possessions they had begun to cultivate, and in consequence, to value and esteem. The High National Council became alarmed: the great federal tomahawk, with great solemnity was taken from the ground: red feathers were sent to every nation, and war against the cruel insatiable whites, was publicly declared. To the gratification of every man inspired by the honourable principles of humanity and justice, this declaration was followed by the instant and sudden death of the greatest part of their cruel and blood-thirsty invaders. Those who escaped, and who wished for the continuance of a few years, appealed for protection to Congress, and to its eternal disgrace and infamy, the Congress afforded them both succour and approbation. An Indian war was the universal cry through the whole states: volunteers rushed from every quarter, and wretched was he whose parent's circumstance or situation denied him the glory of exterminating with his own hand, some forty, or fifty Indians. For the commissions of a troop of cavalry raised for this service, general Washington had received upwards of four thousand memorials, issuing from compting-houses, banks, farms, manufactures, and public and private schools. But God and Justice, for a time resided

with the Indians. Such was their success, that the moral and the good cried out, "surely they are the armies of the "living God." They fought several pitched battles with the Americans, and reduced their army several times to the necessity of being renewed and recruited. One commander in chief, several staff officers, and a multitude of privates were killed in one particular engagement, from the field of which, the whites had to fly several miles; on their return next day, they found the mouths and bodies of their generals and companions killed in battle, stuffed and crammed with earth, and stuck through with the boughs and branches of trees. At this dreadful but just spectacle, they were struck with horror and remorse. What, said they, we came into this country in search of new acquisition and territory, and we now find by the lesson before us, that we are to purchase it in this terrific way; that, for a mouthful of it, we are to surrender our lives. For this in fact was precisely what the Indian figure implied. Conciliation followed. Deputations passed. Boundaries were fixed, and peace was proclaimed with the Indian tribes throughout America, with much more joy than that which was manifested at the conclusion of the war with the British. Congress ordained that no individual should purchase Indian lands, whether from individuals or from tribes; that Indian life and property was under the ægis of the law, as firmly as though they were appertaining to actual American citizens, and that commerce, dealings, and intercourse with them, should be conducted with a respect to their own regulations, and the regards and justice due to all people. This conduct in the Congress was highly satisfactory to the Indians, who did not see through its real and hidden motives. They did not perceive that Congress reserved to itself the right of legally robbing them. This was soon after done. A regular mission was sent to the Indians, proposing to give them some few thousand dollars, and a certain sum annually, and a few trinkets, if they would entirely sell their country and retire to near the lakes, the peaceable possession of which the Americans would inviolably secure to them. Dazzled by these meritorious offers, their folly abandoned what their valour could have maintained, and they now reside and receive their annuity in the neighbourhood of Detrail, and along the waters of their far famed Ontario, whose beauties breathe through their lungs, and whose wonders magnify all their traditions.

This purchase effected, the Indian country took the name

of the North-West Territory, and, a few years since, on its determined increase of population, it assumed the title of the Ohio State, and bids fair, in a very short time, to rank high in the federal union. It is about five hundred square miles, bounded on the north, by the lakes and Canada; on the south by the Ohio river; on the east, by part of Pennsylvania and New York, and on the west, by the Indian territory, which in its turn, will soon become a state.

This state is watered by several navigable rivers, running from the north to the Ohio, and by numerous creeks and streams, winding nearly the same course. Its banks on the Ohio are far more eligible for settlements, than the opposite Virginian and Kentuckey shore. Villages and settlements are within very few miles of each other, and the towns of Marcella, and Cincennall, are large, and rising into commercial eminence. The principal town is Chilcothe, situated nearly in the centre of the state; there the government resides, and is held the principal land office, &c. &c.

The land of the plains; of the borders of rivers; of the great meadows, and of all the tract lying between the two Miamis (two rivers so called) is without any exception the finest known in the world. The greatest part then of this land, being obtained by Congress from the Indians by an imposition, called by the fallacious name of a legal purchase, is known by the name of "Congress Lands," as stated in the early part of this letter, and exposed you to this long dissertation on Indian war and topographical history. I resume, however, the subject of "Congress Lands."

By virtue of the treaty of the aboriginal confederacy, and subsequent purchases, Congress has become the proprietor of nearly all the fine lands in the state. I have mentioned where such lands most abound, and should have stated, that nearly one-third of the country is mountainous and ridgy, bog and morass, to such a degree as not to be worth one cent. per acre. The principal part of the state, of this character, lies to the north-east, and east of the river Scioto. The best land is to the west of that river, and continues, with few exceptions, to the boundary westward of the Great Miami. It is very necessary that purchasers at a distance should be aware of this, as I have known several who bought in a distant market, at a good price, come several thousand miles, to take possession of a sterile mountain, or an unreclaimable swamp. The truth is, that no person should buy, who is not on the spot, or who has not a confidential agent. The mode of sale adopted by Congress, is highly commendable.

The entire country is surveyed, and divided into sections of six hundred and forty acres each. A certain number of these sections lying contiguous, compose a township, and a certain number of townships forms a range. The sections are all numbered, and each number sixteen in every township is reserved for the purpose of education and the support of its professors. There are also reservations, which cannot be sold under eight dollars an acre; but every other acre of Congress land is sold at two dollars per acre for ever: and, to encourage settlers, the period of four years is allowed for the entire payment, which commences one-fourth at the bargain, and the remainder at three yearly instalments. This indulgence on the part of government was most productive to a few sordid monopolizers, called land-jobbers, or land speculators, who made large contracts for twenty thousand to five hundred thousand acres of the best land and in the best situations, and have already sold the greatest part at from three to five dollars an acre. A meadow called the Rick-a-way plains, containing ten thousand acres free of wood, is advanced, by one of these gentlemen, from the two dollars an acre to be paid by his contract, to thirty dollars per acre, and a considerable part of it is already sold. The portion under cultivation has yielded one hundred and ten bushels of corn, and fifty bushels of wheat, per acre. The land the most sought after is on the Scioto, the Ohio, and the Miamis: on which situations the title of Congress is for the most part bought up, and the present owners demand for it from six to twelve dollars per acre. But if the land should be on a mill seat, or place eligible for the site of a village or town, the price might possibly be raised to one hundred dollars per acre.

Many local circumstances sometimes also unite to raise the price of certain lands; such as their vicinity to improving towns; their abundance of ship timber, the facility of conveying it to builders' yards, and their possession of the sugar maple, cherry tree, sassafras, cotton, and other plants. On the whole, I know of no speculation so promising, as that of buying the remaining good lands, reservations, and all (except schools, reservations which are never to be sold) from Congress at two dollars per acre, and of holding them for the space of ten years; after that period no moderate land will be sold under ten dollars per acre, and land of the first qualities and situation will fetch fifty in general, and much more in particular, per acre. The reasons for this are obvious; the lands of the Atlantic states are not to be com-

pared to these in point of fertility and every excellence; the climate here is not worse, and the state tolerates no slavery.

This last circumstance has already given it the name of the independent country; the state where man is free but not licentious. In consequence, quakers, and other religious professors, enemies to intolerance and oppression, whether christian or political, have settled in the state, and are daily followed by thousands who either admire, or affect to advocate their principles and doctrines. Such has been this rage, that the last ten years has added to the state one hundred thousand inhabitants, said to be the most peaceable, inoffensive, moral, and industrious citizens belonging to the American nation. I have a very strong predilection for the state, I must own to you, and a presentiment, from what I observe and hear at present, that my future experience will justify all my hopes, and prove to you that I am more happy when a people permit me to say any thing in their favour, than when their vices and follies compel me to condemn them. I do not mean to be more particular on the subject just now, as I shall have to observe and say a vast deal more relating to the state during my voyage down its southern border along the river. I must notwithstanding remark, generally, that the climate is very relaxing from excess of heat in summer, and very dangerous from the precarious and uncertain vicissitudes of it in winter. Those two seasons are however the most healthy. The spring and *fall*, as autumn is here called, are subject to visitations of diarrhœa and fever, but not in so great a degree as in the lower parts of the river. These facts might be sufficient to deter moderate minds from exposing themselves and families to such a climate and to such vicissitudes;—if they be not, there are not wanting others sufficiently cogent and strong to cause reflection at least before steps of such consequence as emigrations are taken. I have asserted, and have to maintain it, that land is to be had of the most superior quality at an extraordinary low price. But I ask you, who are a lover of reasoning and an advocate of common sense, whether the words good and cheap are not to be considered as relative terms, to be compared with those of moderate and dear, in order to distinguish their appropriate acceptations? But to have done with this jargon, and speak a more comprehensive language, I will give you an honest Dutchman's opinion of the business, who has purchased experience, and qualified himself to give instruction and advice:—Being dissatisfied with lands in Pennsylvania, which, with hard and unceasing industry,

yielded but from seven to twelve bushels of wheat per acre; from twenty-five to thirty-five of corn; and so on in proportion with other produce, he came into the Ohio state and purchased a very fine section from Congress at two dollars per acre. This land was equal to his most sanguine expectations. Three years after it was cleared it produced him one hundred bushels of Indian corn, and from forty to fifty of wheat per acre. This delighted the Dutchman; the argument appeared strong, and the old Pennsylvania farm began to be talked of only to be despised. This triumph was but of short duration. The Dutchman was near two thousand miles from the principal market; this he could not attend; storekeepers and itinerant merchants bought his produce at their own prices, in exchange, often for unnecessary goods, and the profits of his most luxurious harvests were no more, saying the best, than those of his former farm, when in the vicinity of a market, where the price of produce always bore affinity to the quality of land and the labour employed to render it prolific. The Dutchman had to compare but one article: at his former market he could get from ten to twelve dollars per barrel for his flour, in his present situation he can get but three. And, as he is occasionally visited by grubs, flies, and clouds of locusts, he cannot average his wheat crop at above thirty *nett* bushels per acre; therefore, he and his family must in future speak in less disrespectful terms of the old Pennsylvania farm, and recommend, as he tells me he always does, his former neighbours to enquire the price of produce before they pretend to fix a value on land, or leave their old settlements without the good grounds of unprejudiced calculations, and ample and liberal enquiries.

I propose to leave this place to-morrow morning. I have not heard of any thing farther, of sufficient interest to improve or entertain, though you may be well convinced that I annoy every person whose countenance beams intelligence, and even those whose features manifest none. I make no doubt that I am considered a strange medley; an interrogative animal passing through society merely to perplex it with questions; to gain all information, and to communicate none. Some stare at me with astonishment when I abruptly address them, and others not knowing what to answer, turn on their heel. What a foolish man, say all, to lose his time and go in such a manner through the world, merely to ask questions!

LETTER XI.

Charlestown—Vicious Taste, in building to the River—Copied from Philadelphia—Its Punishment—Navigation from Charlestown to Wheeling—This Port-town described—Its origin—Sketch of the Inhabitants and their Propensities—A Virginian Horse-race—A Boxing-match—A Ball and Supper—The Sequel—A Pathetic Story.

Wheeling, Virginia, April, 1806.

THE morning after my departure from Stubenville, I dropped seven miles lower down to breakfast at Charlestown, on the opposite shore.

Charlestown is finely situated on the Virginia side, at the junction of Buffalo creek and the Ohio. It is a flourishing place, commanding the trade of the surrounding rich settlement; and having many excellent mills, is much resorted to by purchasers of flour. The boats can be purchased at the Pittsburg price, and articles of provision on very reasonable terms.

The town, which contains about one hundred and fifty houses, was originally well laid out with the best row facing the river, and the intermediate space answered the purpose of a street, explanade, and water terrace, giving an air of health and cheerfulness gratifying to the inhabitants, and highly pleasing to those descending the stream. However, owing to the avarice of the proprietor of the terrace, and a disgraceful absence of judgment and taste, he has sold his title to the water side, and the purchasers are now building on it; turning the back of their houses immediately close to the edge of the bank, and excluding all manner of view and communication from the best of the town. This violation of taste, it seems, is not to go unpunished. The bank is undermining fast, and in a very few years, these obtruding edifices must fall unless removed. This vice of building to the high water mark, is not peculiar to Charlestown: Philadelphia set the example. Philadelphia, which might have had an open airy explanade of four miles long, on a beautiful river, facing a delightful cultivated shore, has not now thirty feet of quay. The store-houses are absolutely built on piles in the water, and crowded on each other in such a manner, as to convey an idea of deficiency of land for the extension of

the city, and to carry on its commercial affairs. Philadelphia has long suffered by these disgraceful erections. The yellow fever there maintains a perpetual residence, or annually issues from a crowded water side to pollute the whole town, and carry off its thousands*! I could not resist apologising thus much with the Charlestown citizens. They wished me good bye as I departed, and I previously wished them an improvement of reason and taste.

The channel from Charlestown continued on the Virginia shore till I came to Beach Bottom, when it wore over to the right-hand side. The navigation then became intricate, being obstructed by a ripple; Pike Island, Twin Islands, from being similar and close together, Glin's Run and Wheeling Island. From this last island to Wheeling, I beg you to observe how accurate one must be. These are the instructions.

Channel on the Virginia shore—*at* the upper end keep near to the shore, *thence* across towards the island for about one hundred yards; *when* you come in sight of the next ripple, make still more towards the island, and *after* you pass the ripple, keep down near the middle between the shore and the island, till you pull in for Wheeling.—You may perceive from this, that a steersman has sufficient occupation, and that the oars must sometimes work.

The town of Wheeling is well known as one of the most considerable places of embarkation to traders and emigrants, on the western waters. It is a port-town, healthfully and pleasantly situated on a very high bank of the river, and is increasing rapidly. Here quantities of merchandize designed for the Ohio country, and the Upper Louisiana, are brought in waggons during the dry seasons; as boats can frequently go from hence, when they cannot from places higher up the river. Besides, as the navigation above Wheeling is more dangerous than all the remainder of the river, persons should undoubtedly give it the preference to Pittsburg. The distance by water to Pittsburg is eighty-two miles; by land only forty-five, by a good road. A coach runs from Philadelphia also, to this town, for thirty dollars each passenger; and the waggons which daily arrive, charge little more per cent. than the Pittsburg price. On the whole, I give this

* The great fire of London was eventually beneficial. The plague was frequent before that calamity, but since the improved airyness of the after-built streets, it has never occurred.

place a decided preference, and prognosticate, that it will ultimately injure and rival all the towns above its waters.

The town is formed of about two hundred and fifty houses; ten of which are built of brick, eighteen of stone, and the remainder of logs. The plain on which it stands, containing about seven hundred acres, is surrounded by immense hills, except on the lowermost side; where it is bounded by a fine creek of clear water, near the head of which are erected some fine mills for flour and timber.

This plain, although one hundred feet above low water, was originally formed by the river subsiding; and there is a narrower place, or what is here called *bottom*, immediately flowing from the hills, which also was under water; but, by the growth of its timber, and superior height, its submergement must have been at a much more remote period than that of the plain on which the town is built. A part of the latter is now a very small but excellent race ground.

The original settlers were not calculated to give importance to an infant establishment. Had they been so, had they attended to worthy commercial pursuits, and industrious and moral dealings, in place of rapine on Indian property, drunkenness, horse-racing, and cock-fighting, their town would have rivalled Pittsburg long since, and have now enjoyed a respectable name.

This part of Virginia was, at no very remote period, deemed the *frontier*, not only of Virginia, but of America. To this frontier all persons outlawed, or escaping from justice, fled, and resided without the apprehension of punishment, or the dread of contempt and reproach. They formed a species of nefarious republic, where equality of crime constituted a social band, which might to this day have remained unbroken, but for the effects of the conclusion of the Indian war, which extended the frontier across the river nearly to the Canada line, leaving the ancient boundary within the jurisdiction of government, and under the immediate grasp of the law. Those who fled from the restraints of moral and political obligations, were exasperated at this unforeseen event, and felt hurt that a better sort of people came among them. The consequence previously assumed by thieves and swindlers, fled the presence of morals and justice. Such as were determined not to submit to an improvement of life, and a daily comparison of character, left the country; while others, who "repented of their ways," remained, and are now blended with the better order of citi-

zens. Of these materials, the society of this town is now formed. But I have it from the good authority of a quaker of high respectability, that the old settlers will all be *bought out* in time, and the place become new and regenerated. He founds his hopes on the belief that his friends, when backed by others of their profession, to settle in the town, will gain an ascendancy in the municipal affairs; abolish cock-fighting, horse-racing, fighting, drinking, gambling, &c. and above all, enforce the observance of the Sabbath and other solemn days.

I assured the quaker, that if ever he saw his hopes realized, that he would not only clear the town of its original race, but of every profligate whatsoever, and deter others of similar description, from coming into it. He appeared much pleased at this assurance, though he deemed its consummation as arduous as Herculean labour. I fear in this respect he is too well founded: indeed, my acquaintance with the place, convinces me that much time and unremitted assiduity must be employed to make it a tolerable residence for any class of men, much less a society of quakers. The majority of the present inhabitants have no means whatever of distinguishing Sunday, but by a greater degree of violence and debauchery than the affairs of ordinary days will allow them to manifest. Even on occasion of business, the smallest occurrence will draw them from it, and expose it to total negligence.

Yesterday two fellows drinking in a public-house, the conversation turned on the merit of their horses—two wretched animals they had ridden into town that morning, and which had remained fasting at a post. A wager, the consequence of every argument on this side the mountains, was made, and the poor brutes were galloped off to the race-course. Two-thirds of the population followed:—blacksmiths, ship-wrights, all left work: the town appeared a desert. The stores were shut. I asked a proprietor, why the warehouses did not remain open? He told me all good was done for that day: that the people would remain on the ground till night, and many stay till the following morning. I was determined to see this Virginian recreation, which caused such an abandonment of care and business. On my arrival on the ground, the original race had been won, and the price of a saddle was collecting to excite another course, and raise new opponents. This was soon effected: the course was cleared, and six poor devils were started for the saddle, and numerous bets laid by the owners and

spectators. The number of persons interested in this affair, and some disputed points which occurred in the adjustment of it, gave rise to a variety of opinion: umpires were called in: their judgment was rejected, and a kind of general battle ensued. This affray over, the quarrel took a smaller circle, confined to two individuals, a Virginian by birth, and a Kentuckeyman by adoption. A ring was formed, and the mob demanded whether they proposed to *fight fair*, or to *rough and tumble*. The latter mode was preferred. Perhaps you do not exactly understand the distinction of these terms. Fight fair, however, is much in the English manner; and here, as there, any thing foul requires interference; but when parties choose to *rough and tumble*, neither the populace nor individuals are to intermeddle or hinder either combatant from tearing or rending the other on the ground, or in any other situation. You startle at the words *tear* and *rend*, and again do not understand me. You have heard these terms, I allow, applied to beasts of prey and to carnivorous animals; and your humanity cannot conceive them applicable to man: it nevertheless is so, and the fact will not permit me the use of any less expressive term. Let me proceed. Bulk and bone were in favour of the Kentuckeyan; science and craft in that of the Virginian. The former promised himself victory from his power, the latter from his *science*. Very few rounds had taken place, or fatal blows given, before the Virginian contracted his whole form, drew up his arms to his face, with his hands nearly closed in a concave, by the fingers being bent to the full extension of the flexors, and summoning up all his energy for one act of desperation, pitched himself into the bosom of his opponent. Before the effects of this could be ascertained, the sky was rent by the shouts of the multitude; and I could learn that the Virginian had expressed as much *beauty* and *skill* in his retraction and bound, as if he had been bred in a menagerie, and practised action and attitude among panthers and wolves. The shock received by the Kentuckeyan, and the want of breath, brought him instantly to the ground. The Virginian never lost his hold; like those bats of the south who never quit the subject on which they fasten till they taste blood, he kept his knees in his enemy's body; fixing his claws in his hair, and his thumbs on his eyes, gave them an instantaneous start from their sockets. The sufferer roared aloud, but uttered no complaint. The citizens again shouted with joy. Doubts were no longer entertained; and bets of three to one

were offered on the Virginian. The Kentuckeyan not being able to disentangle his adversary from his face, adopted a new mode of warfare; and, in imitation of the serpent which crushes such creatures to death as it proposes for its food, he extended his arms round the Virginian, and hugged him into closer contact with his huge body. The latter disliking this, cast loose the hair and convex eyes of his adversary, when both, folded together like bears in an embrace, rolled several turns over each other. The acclamations increased, and bets run that the Kentuckeyan "*would give out*," that is, after being mutilated and deprived of his eyes, ears, and nose, he would cry out for mercy and aid. The public were not precisely right. Some dæmon interposed for the biggest monster; he got his enemy under him, and in an instant snapt off his nose so close to his face, that no manner of projection remained. The little Virginian made one farther effort, and fastening on the under lip of his mutilator, tore it over the chin. The Kentuckeyan at length *gave out*, on which the people carried off the victor, and he preferring a triumph to a doctor, who came to cicatrize his face, suffered himself to be chaired round the ground as the champion of the times, and the first *rougher and tumbler*. The poor wretch, whose eyes were started from their spheres, and whose lip refused its office, returned to the town, to hide his impotence, and get his countenance repaired.

This spectacle ended, and the citizens, refreshed with whiskey and biscuit, sold on the ground, the races were renewed, and possibly other editions of the monstrous history I have just recited; but I had had sufficient of the *sports of the day*, and returned to my quaker friend, with whom I had engaged to take my dinner. He was afflicted, but by no means surprised at the news I brought him, and informed me no farther, that such doings were common, frequently two or three times a week; and that twice a year, or at the spring and fall races, they continued for fourteen days without interruption, aided by the licentious and profligate of all the neighbouring states. As to the savage practice of fighting in the manner of wild beasts, my host entertained no hopes whatever of ever seeing it put down. It might be called a national taste, which the laws appeared afraid to violate; and therefore it reared its head above authority. Few nights elapsed without the exhibition of this new gymnastic; few mornings appeared that did not bring to day a friend or acquaintance with the loss of an eye, or the mutilation of half his features. Alarmed at this account, I asked

whether this kind of conduct spread down the river. I understood that it did on the left-hand side, and that I would do well to land there as little as possible; that many of the small inns on the Virginia and Kentuckey shore, were held in solitary situations by persons of infamous character, driven from the interior and the head waters, by the gradual encroachments made on them by morals, religion, and justice. At such taverns, there were always persons at no loss for a subject of quarrel. The invariable consequence of which was, the loss of sight, and sometimes of life, and the total confiscation of property, by the villains, who, on maiming, or murdering the inoffensive party, rush out of the house, seize his boat, and descend the river, never more to be heard of—the landlord swearing he had never seen them before, or had any knowledge to what place they belonged. All the taverns, however, are not so bad. There was generally to be found one of a better sort in towns and villages where there was some semblance of law, or some apprehension of justice. I again demanded, how a stranger was to distinguish a good from a vicious house of entertainment? I was answered, by previous inquiry; or, if that was impracticable, a tolerable judgment could be formed, from observing in the landlord, *a possession, or an absence of ears:* many of the proprietors of small inns being men who had left those members nailed to certain penitential market crosses in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the Carolinas, in lieu of certain horses and cattle of which they had from time to time become the illegal owners. Furnished with these useful instructions, I left my kind entertainer, and retired to my inn, with a view of passing a peaceable night. It was not so ordained. It seems the store-keepers, and the principal citizens, knowing the people had no intention of returning to their avocations, had resolved to amuse themselves, and associated for the purpose of having a ball and supper at the principal inn. On my arrival the landlord, with much politeness, told me, that my quality of stranger and a gentleman, gave me a title to enter the public room. I benefited by this intimation, yet, notwithstanding the delicacy and hospitality it conveyed, I could not resist casting a glance, *en passant*, at the head of my host, to observe whether it was provided with ears. Pleased on perceiving these ornamental appendages, or, to follow up the quaker's idea, these indications of character and safety, I entered the ball-room, which was filled with persons at cards, drinking, smoaking, dancing, &c. The *music* consisted of two ban-

gies, played by negroes nearly in a state of nudity, and a lute, through which a Chickesaw breathed with much occasional exertion and violent gesticulations. The dancing accorded with the harmony of these instruments. The clamour of the card tables was so great, that it almost drowned every other; and the music of Ethiopia was with difficulty heard. A man should never judge of the principles of the entertainment of others, by his individual conceptions. This ball, considered a violent vulgar uproar by me, afforded the utmost delight to the assembly, and possibly would have concluded with infinite joy and satisfaction at an early hour next day, had not an unlucky wight of a drunken politician, seized a friend by the throat, and threatened to annihilate him, if he did not drink "Damnation to Thomas Jefferson." A bustle and crowd collected about the parties; the ladies and the music made a precipitate retreat, and I quickly followed, and learned from the landlord, who sat by his fire-side perfectly composed, that the ball was over—that a *row* had commenced, which was a signal for the retreat of the *graces*, and a general break up. I hinted at the propriety of his interference, when he very coolly told me, that if there were any ruffians in company, *it was fit* they should be kicked out, and that, bad as the place was, there were always *gentlemen* at his balls who obligingly took that office on themselves. His words were soon verified. A cry of *out, out; whip them all!* issued from the room; immediately after a torrent rushed through the passage, and a noise of sticks, and cries, and execrations of every shade, modulation, and sort. The door locked on the whole party, and silence again restored, we visited the theatre of the late effervescence, and found but one person stretched on the ground. I was proceeding to express some apprehension, when my host exclaimed—"Oh! it is Mr. ————, he is only drunk, he will remain here quietly till morning." With that he drew him along the floor to a corner, and having placed a few chairs as a guard, considered that he had done much towards his accommodation.

Though it was by this time far advanced in the night, and I felt no disposition to retire to rest, my mind was too much agitated and full, to benefit by a too sudden, or a forced repose; and I preferred the conversation of mine host one half-hour longer. It turned on the events of the day, and the evening amusement. He very candidly admitted all I said in favour of more civilized recreations; and even went so far as to tell me a variety of anecdotes, which, from a re-

spect for human nature, I suppress. Were it not for the intervention of a *row*, which he considered an innocent occurrence, the close of balls could never be ascertained. He had known them to continue for six and thirty hours together, and many of the men, at other times, have remained to gamble and drink for weeks after the original festival. These balls and rows were frequently followed by duels. That ball or row was thought a mild one, which did not produce from two to three of the latter. "An affair of this kind happened," said my landlord, "a few balls back, involving in its consequences, *out of the common*, and *rather* of a melancholy kind. A dispute," continued he, "took place, in my house, between two young men, who had been the most intimate friends, as much so, that one of them, Mr. H. who is my neighbour, was to be married the Sunday after the ball and the dispute, to the sister of the other, Mr. B. who lives but a small distance up the town. The ties to be formed from this intention, former intimacy, and the interposition of love and friendship, were all of no avail: to fight they were determined; place and time were cautiously appointed. But love is not easily to be deceived. Maria, the sister of B. and the betrothed of H. received the fatal intelligence; hastened to the ground, and arrived—but in time only to hear the shot, and receive a bleeding lover in her extended arms. The lead passed through his lungs—he instantly expired. The senses of Maria are lost: she knows no person: she has not spoke to a human being since! I can shew her to you to-morrow: a slender tall figure, her head and bosom covered with a black veil; her motion quick, and her air disturbed. She passes every day in her way to a favorite grave, and returns with an appearance still more dejected and broken-hearted. But the poor maid will soon join her lover, and leave a world in which she imagines she has no friend." I could hear no more, the Virginian himself was moved. I ordered a light, and gaining my chamber, cast myself on a bed to rest: yet not before I cursed the ferocity of manners which reigns in this place, and which caused the eternal wretchedness and misery of an object so amiable and instructing as my landlord's Maria. It is intolerable. It is infamous. Farewell. You can account for my abrupt conclusion.

LETTER XII.

A Mail-coach Road from Philadelphia to Lexington, in Kentuckey, Seven Hundred Miles—Accomodations on the Road—Enchanting Valley, and Creeks—Their origin—History of the first Settlement of Cooandanaga, by Irish Emigrants—Its judicious Regulations—Mr. Fitzpatrick its Head—Manner of passing Sunday in this little Republic—General Situation of its Inhabitants—Long Reach—Indian Imitations of Animals.

Marietta, State of Ohio, May, 1806.

I HURRIED out of Wheeling with a precipitation which precluded all further inquiries, and, perhaps, in a state of mind unfavourable to the pursuit of any farther knowledge of that place. There is a very beautiful island directly opposite Wheeling, to which there is a ferry, and another ferry from the island to the Ohio shore, where commences a road leading to Chitocothe, and the interior of the state, of which that town is the capital. The road, for the most part, is mountainous and swampy, notwithstanding which, a mail-coach is established on it, from Philadelphia to Lexington, in Kentuckey, through Pittsburg, Wheeling, and Chitocothe, a distance of upwards of seven hundred miles, to be performed by contract in fifteen days. Small inns are to be found, every ten or twelve miles of the route. They are generally log huts, of one apartment, and the entertainment consists of bacon, whiskey, and Indian bread. Let those who despise this bill of fare, remember, that seven years since, this road was called the Wilderness, and travellers had to encamp, find their own provisions, and with great difficulty secure their horses from panthers and wolves. Another remark is to be made on this great road. Directly on ascending the mountain in the rear of Wheeling, an immense deep and gloomy valley appears in view; twelve miles long, by from two to six broad. It is completely surrounded by high mountains, through which there is but one small pass, serving for the current of the water of a beautiful creek that traverses the valley twelve different times in search of a level, to facilitate its course to the Ohio, and the sea. The road crosses the creek at every traverse, and, for the entire length, is nearly a perfect plain, adorned with trees of the most sumptuous growth; with corn and wheat of an unexampled luxuriance, and encircled by an amphitheatre of mountains, whose summits of eternal verdure, are often embraced by the

clouds. The soil, composed of decayed vegetable substances, and putrid animal remains, appears like a fine garden mould; it is from three to sixteen feet deep, and, judging from the channel of the creek, is deposited on gravel and limestone rock. There are eight settlers on this enchanting spot, who have to regret nothing but the too transient visits of the sun, who, in his meridian glory, looks down on this little world, sheds upon it his most fervid rays, until intercepted by the mountains, towards the south, he sets in the vigour of the day. I was about to give you a chain of philosophical reasoning and evidence, to bear me out in an opinion, that this valley was formed by the subsiding of water, which found an avenu, in a circuit of the mountain, and by attrition wore it to its base, when it lost its volume and immensity, and assumed the gentle character of the present lovely vale, drained of every thing noxious, by a rapid and transparent creek, till I understood that the people of the country, not only entertained my opinion, but at once, and without hesitation, called the place "The Dry Lake," or, "The Valley of the Lake," by which name, it is known to this day. I need mention but two of the motives on which they grounded their decision. 1st, The fissure in the mountain, through which the creek now flows, nearly from the origin to the base, has, on each side, rocks, stones, and strata, wasted, indented, and hallowed by attrition. 2dly, The mountains' sides, from top to bottom, exhibit a regular series of swells and falls, which are known to be the effect of the undulatory motion of waters, and their periodical rise and descent.

About a mile below the dry lake, on the opposite side, a creek enters the Ohio, also from between the opening of a mountain. Immediately on leaving Wheeling, I worked my boat rather across the stream, and in less than ten minutes, dropped into the mouth of the creek, where I made fast and prepared to ascend the hill, take a view of the back country, and, if inviting, range through it. I scram led with much difficulty to the summit, from which I plainly saw that the creek flowed through a valley, nearly similar to that of the dry lake. Perceiving a well improved farm on the borders of the creek, and about a mile from where I stood, I made for it, and on my arrival found a very intelligent settler, from a half hour's ramble with whom I obtained the following particulars.

The valley, which was seven miles long, and from two to

five broad, was called *Cooandanaga*, an Indian term, signifying the woody lake. It was watered by the creek in every direction, having a course beating from one side to the other, till it issued where I had left the boat. This creek has a great advantage over that I have just mentioned on the opposite side, for, having a rapid descent from its fountain, it serves two capital mills which work at seasons, when the water of others is entirely consumed. The great western road passes through this valley, and is at times so miry and bad, that the mail-coach has been known to pass through it with difficulty in an entire day. The soil is immensely deep, and nearly as black as coal. The timber is not near so large or so old as that of the dry lake, and a variety of other testimony rushes on the mind, to prove that the waters of this former lake had remained many centuries after those of the other had passed away. The wood is not the growth of many ages; the soil is not changed by exposure to external air, and much of the land is but now rising out of submergement, to receive the influence of the wind and sun. The mountains encircling this spot, are not quite so elevated as those round the dry lake. Those on the north-west side are the highest, which accounts in some degree, for the waters forcing a passage to the south-east. The real bed of Cooandanaga, is limestone rock, similar to that of the river, and the dry lake. From consequences to be deduced from these facts; from numerous other seats of lakes known in the country, and from the number of plains and bottoms which every where abound, formed, evidently on the retreat of water, and composed of vegetable and animal substances of every description, it is manifest that the whole scope of country, from above a range of mountains which cross the river somewhere below the falls, as high up as Pittsburg, and border lake Eric, once formed an immense chain of lakes. The continued and unremitting industry of water, to find a level to the sea; the constant, though gradual waste by attrition, or a convulsion of nature, which rent every barrier to its base, at length let loose the waters, drained the lakes, and the floods, entering from all parts of the higher to the lower grounds, formed the bed of the river now called Ohio. Till persons of a better information disprove this—such shall remain my decided opinion.

As the first settlement of Cooandanaga embraces the history of many settlements in this part of the globe, I give it you nearly in the words of my informer.

Near ten years have elapsed since the demon of revolution

had overthrown some of the best governments in Europe, and shed the baneful seeds of dissention and anarchy over the surface of the eastern world. The Irish, those unsophisticated children of nature, were the first to encourage principles, which they were instructed to believe to be alone compatible with the rights and the dignity of man. They were taught to consider the throne and the altar as the mere instruments of national subservion, and morals and laws as nothing more than unreasonable shackles, fit only to restrain the mental and physical energies of bondsmen and slaves. It is not to be wondered at, that a people abandoned to an instruction of this kind, and what is worse, abandoned by the intelligent of their own community, who reside in great towns, or for the most part abroad, should imagine themselves aggrieved, and proceed to measures presumed necessary to the promotion of public happiness, and the security of a general and individual liberty. In adopting these criminal measures for the purpose of correcting visionary ills, they incurred the displeasure of government; many expiated their offences on the scaffold, and others crossed the most distant seas.

In the autumn of 1798, several thousands left Ireland, buoyed up with a hope, that having escaped from the land of tyranny, they would be received in America with the acclamation of joy, or the sensibility of fraternal tears. At the period of their arrival, America was but regurgerating her own rebels, and saw with alarm the superfluity of other nations thrown into her bosom. Besides, as these unfortunate Irish generally came in ships crowded with from three to five hundred each, and furnished with provision unhealthy and scanty, they consequently arrived in a shocking state, and had to be succoured by individuals, or taken into public hospitals.

Independently then of the dislike the American government began to entertain to the importation of rebel and disaffected doctrines, they saw a serious danger in receiving such a number at a time of sickly and wretched objects, who for want of means, character, and health, could not be able to assist themselves, and therefore should become a burden to the state: they remonstrated with the cabinet at St. James's, and that court decreed that no legal banishments should be made to America.

The ship in which my informer, Mr. Fitzpatrick, came, left Cork for Philadelphia, with two hundred emigrants; in consequence of being stifled in the hold, want of provision

and water, seventy-six died, and were cast overboard; on her arrival at Wilmington, on the Delaware, eighty-seven more were received into the hospital, and the remaining thirty-seven walked on to Philadelphia, there to beg the streets. A few of these were advised to go to the city of Washington in search of work; a few more died of want, contagion, and misery, while Fitzpatrick, and fifteen followers, aided by a small sum of money, clothes, and instruments of husbandry, generously made up for them by a society of Irishmen in Philadelphia, set off for the western country, and arrived at Cooandanaga, where they determined to stop. The vicinity of the vale to the main water; the great utility of a creek commanding a fall of thirty feet in less than one mile, and the light manner in which they found the land timbered, were the motives for this preference. The land itself was not at first much esteemed by these settlers. Black and mixed with roots and other deleterious substances, they feared it might be similar to the bogs of their own country, which yielded nothing but moss, heath, rushes, and flags, and refused melioration even from the severest industry. A little observation proved the fallacy of their ideas on this head. They located the valley the first season, cleared about five acres of ground each, and planted Indian corn, cabbage, and a few potatoes. These throve to such an astonishing degree, that more land was joyfully cleared for the following year, planted in like manner, and that of the former season reserved for wheat. Owing to the extreme richness of the soil, the wheat crop failed: it ran up to stalk above seven feet high, and bore little or no corn. Having been since reduced by several successive heavy crops of Indian corn, it begins to bear wheat in considerable perfection, though it still rambles much above the reaper's head. The cabbages grow to a great size, yet are not of a permanent utility, in consequence of their being overrun, eaten, or perforated by millions of insects, before they can in any quantity be brought into use and laid by as a winter provision. The potatoes are large, spongy, and wet.

The houses of the settlement are built with much comfort and neatness. Though scattered through the vale, the settlers have the good sense to unite on all occasions which require the power of many hands. Hence buildings for residence and convenience, clearing land, and rolling ponderous and heavy logs, are effected in a proper and speedy manner, without consuming the health and wasting the time of a poor individual, who, had he the whole to complete through

his own means and industry, would droop or sink under the task before it was a tenth part completed.

I met with nothing so sensible and so judicious as this little republic since I crossed the mountains. The members of it atone, by a regulated and laborious life, for the political sins they committed. I attribute the wisdom of this conduct, and the prudence of these resolutions, to the counsel and example of their leader, Mr. Fitzpatrick, whom the governor of the state has chosen as the Justice of their district, and whom they themselves have elected as their minister and teacher. Mr. F. joins to a good natural understanding, corrected and improved by adversity, an excellent heart, and a mind formed to impress on others a love of virtue and morality. On conversing with him some time, I ceased to wonder at the account he gave me of himself and associates. So true it is, that the example of wisdom and goodness is captivating; that it shines out in the actions and countenances of those who practise them; reforms folly and vice, and spreads its influence over the untutored residents of the most untutored wilderness. I could not help loving this good man, and of sincerely wishing that all misguided emigrants, on abandoning their country and their homes, might choose such a character for their leader.

Having learned his different functions, I was desirous of knowing where they were exercised, and asked him accordingly. The boys and the children, replied Mr. F., meet me at the mill on the afternoon of every Sunday. We there administer the little justice that is wanted among us, say a few prayers, and then make a hurling match in the manner of *our own* country. But if any of the boys be absent, from sickness, the hurling match cannot go on, as we have agreed among ourselves to visit any sick neighbour on Sunday, see that he want for nothing, and, if his indispotition continue, look after his stock, get his harvest in, and repair his house against the rigour of winter!

I would not injure the beauty and excellence of this little narrative by any remark, were there not a few words employed in it that may not, according to their spirit, be exactly understood.

When Mr. F. says, "the boys and the children," he means his old companions and their families, and uses the other apparently unappropriate word as a term of familiarity and endearment, becoming in him as their leader, pastor, and friend. The next expression, "our own country," is more peculiar to the Irish, than to any other emigrant whatever,

and does them much honour. The longer they reside abroad, the more the attachment to their "own country" increases. Even those whom the law rejected, and others who left their homes under the most violent prejudices of a deluded misconception and heated mind, are the first to talk of their "own country," its pleasant hills, green fields, and temperate and happy climate. Their pastime, and their songs too, are national, and their conversations in general, commence how they may, end in tradition and legendary tale.—Convinced of this, you will not be surprised to hear, that very few Irish alienate their political rights, by swearing allegiance to other powers, notwithstanding their casting off responsibility to their own state. At least there is hardly one Irish subject in this part of the world, who has become an American citizen, and certainly not even one who thinks so little of his "own country," as to set on that title any manner of consideration, or respectful consequence.

The last phrase I shall elucidate in Mr. F.'s simple narrative is, "and repair his house against the rigours of winter." In this country in general, most all settlers' houses are built of logs, between which there are large interstices, which require to be filled with well tempered clay. Where good clay can be produced, this filling up remains permanent, but where mould or black earth is employed as a substitute, the heat of summer crumbles it to dust, and the winds blow it through the whole of the apartment. For the want of clay, the houses of Cooandanaga, were therefore every summer reduced to a mere shed, through which the element took an uncontrouled range, and were it not for the admirable regulation of these associated emigrants, "to repair a sick man's "house against the rigours of winter," his disorder would naturally increase, or he would perish from neglect and inclemency.

Three or four of the original settlers are dead, and all the rest have past through the dangerous ordeal of a seasoning, that is, they were from time to time reduced to death's door, and recovered, with the blood so thinned, and constitution so altered, that the climate cannot act upon it with the same violence it exercises on a virgin subject. It is necessary only to add, that these poor settlers were as happy as a people could be, who had left their own green fields for teeming swamps, and burning hills; and who had left a clear and healthy sky, for an atmosphere surcharged, at one time, with sulphurous clouds and fœtid fogs, and at another, with all the putrid and fiery particles of death. They also had to

pine for the absence of the sun a great portion of the year. In winter, he seldom entirely dispersed the vapour which lay densed on the place, and in summer, his visits were uncertain and transient.

You may ask how a valley can be so unsufferably hot which is exposed to so little action of the sun. In Europe you seek the shade and the covert of groves, as a shield against heat. Here the very reverse is practised. The open plain, the tops of hills, alone can be endured. Protected valleys, and immense woods, are found to contain a heat so pestilential, that man and beast abandon them during the fervour of the day, and seek for situations to which the air has access. In extensive dense wildernesses, and in the bosom of vales surrounded by mountains and woods, the air of summer completely stagnates, and remains unruffled, though that of open plains and summits is in continual agitation, and perpetually renewed. There is nothing more common here, than to hear it said, "it is now too hot to work in the "woods," which is saying, it is better to work in the open air, though exposed to all the ardour and violence of the sun.

I returned to my boat, accompanied by Mr. F. and several of his children, one of whom was loaded with a basket, which his father, when at a distance from me, instructed him to bring from his house. I did not return, but chose to follow the creek, in order to observe the characters of the passage in the mountain, which allowed the former waters, and the present stream, to become tributaries to the river and the sea. Mr. F. no sooner observed the subject of my speculation, than he informed me, that he and his friends had no manner of doubt but that they had settled "in the bottom "of a lake." "Look," said he, "at the upper part of the "opening, how it has been torn asunder by some earthquake, "and the under parts for the matter of twenty feet, seem "carried away by the constant current of the waters." The appeal was strong, the facts evident and unequivocal. I had nothing more to do than to gain my boat, where the children had arrived before me, and spread on a table the contents of the basket. It consisted of a wild turkey, some fresh butter, and a loaf of Indian bread. "I thought," said Fitzpatrick, "before I put the blessing of God on your honour, I would "take care your honour had something to eat." I made no reply to this. Mindeth understood me. He put a bottle of rum, some powder and lead into the basket; strung some Indian ornaments round the children's necks, and without

further ceremony hastened the whole party ashore. He then poled the boat out of the creek, on which we all took to our stations, and gained the true current in a few strokes of the oars.

The true current is on the Virginia side. On bearing across, I could just perceive below Wheeling, the remains of an old fort standing on the point of land formed by the junction of Big Wheeling creek, and the Ohio river.

If I except the very extraordinary beauty of the river, its islands, bays, indentions, elevated, and, in many places, cultivated banks, adorned by houses, and resounding with the varied noise of social and busy life, nothing else occurred to me during the day particularly worthy your attention; for I am well persuaded you do not expect a descriptive voyage down a river to consist of every fine view, or to pourtray every striking prospect, bend, turn, or aspect which it is susceptible of assuming. What in truth is more tiresome than a continued strain of luxuriance of mountains, crowned tops of hills, variegated pride, enamelled meads, meandering streams, dashing cataracts, and falling floods? I proceed then in the manner I originally made you to expect, that is, to give thoughts, observations, and occurrences, as occasions and circumstances demand, without forcing them from objects fatiguing to dwell upon, and useless to recount.

It would be unpardonable, however, to omit mentioning a place I arrived at in the evening. It is called Long Reach, is forty-seven miles from Wheeling, and is eighteen miles long. Having arrived there rather late at night, and being somewhat intimidated by the majestic appearance of the river, I resolved to remain till morning, make fast to shore, and encamp after the manner of my proceeding at Grape Island. This occupied no great time; a good fire was lighted, the Cooandanaga turkey prepared, and supper and refreshment spread under the lengthened gloom of a large walnut tree. Something recruited by such excellent refreshment, I took a solitary walk along the shore, and could not avoid remarking the extraordinary difference which the arrival of two or three poor individuals could effect over an immense region of forest. On our first arrival, a silence almost terrific and certainly awful reigned through the woods. The hour was too early for beasts to prowl, and too late for birds to sing. Nature seemed to enjoy a calm, but to us gave a painful repose. Whereas, now the noise of our

axe was returned from afar, the voice of labour reverberated in our ear, the smoke rose to the sky, and the vivid flames of the fire shed a blaze of comfort around, relieved the solemnity of the scene, and spread a golden radiance over the surface of the water. I was drawn from this meditation by Cuff, (whose best talent, I find, to consist in a propensity to imitate wild beasts, and who professes to howl like a wolf, better than any of his nation) he had just begun a *solo* so exquisite in judgment, so correct in expression, and so natural in cadence, that the very demons of the woods awoke, and joined him in horrid chorus. Fearful his imitative powers might invite some unwelcome visitors to the neighbourhood of my camp, I begged of him to suppress his propensity till less danger should be apprehended from its exercise. He told me, what I indeed knew, that where there was fire, there was no danger; that if I would let him go into the wood with my gun, he would cry like a young opossum, and bring me a wolf or a bear in half an hour. Though convinced of his capacity, and the little difficulty he had to personify a brute, I declined his intimation, but told him, if he wished to amuse himself, he might sit on the stern of the boat, while I took a glass of grog at the fire; and in a low voice, give me some specimens of all the languages he had acquired in his early intimacies with the inhabitants of the woods. Quite pleased with the serious manner I addressed him, and delighted with the term "Language," which I gave his art, he took his station, and asked me what he should begin with; whether he was to lure or to alarm? I told him first to lure, and then to alarm, by way of safety for the night. On hearing this, Mindeth stepped into the boat, took some arms, and silently placed himself beside. Cuff began. I must do him the justice to acknowledge, that never was man more perfect, more inimitable in this profession, this science, for which the world yet wants a name. He passed through all the varied modulations between infancy and old age; between a fawn and an elk; between a young calf, and a buffalo bull. The beasts of the forest were deceived. Much commotion ensued. The stir and agitation approached. Mindeth fired a gun and renewed his fire. Cuff next began to alarm. Savage must that beast have been, into which such cries did not strike fear. From the malignant yell of the tyger cat, up to the panther's bloody roar; the wolf's howl, and the bear's rugged voice; all were heard, and all gave alarm. He ceased. A universal cry was uttered through the woods, which struck the

Virginia shore, beat against the opposite hills, and at length died in the distant windings of the water.

I rewarded this extraordinary talent with a bumper of spirits, and asked if all the people of his nation were as *learned* as himself, or much versed in his accomplishments? he replied, that by this time he expected they were much more so, for that they could continue to improve; while he, from residing long among the whites, had not only *not* learned any thing, but *lost* much of the information he originally possessed. He formerly could imitate birds, gobble like a turkey, and crow like a cock; but now he does not know whether he could inveigle birds by these arts, or lure foxes and racoons to approach a snare or a trap. Yet he hoped to be exercised on the way, and to recover his usual powers. Such is this poor fellow. Though he came to me without any character whatever, except the vague one, "of knowing something of the waters," I begin to think him a great acquisition, and shall afford him every possible opportunity of following his propensity, and improving his voice. I have just instructed him to crow in the morning like a cock, in order to rouse up all hands. That I may obey the fellow's summons, which I have no doubt will be given, I hastily wish you a good night, and leave my intended description to my next. This fellow's nonsense has put every sublime idea out of my head.

LETTER XIII.

Fogs—Night and Day Currents, their Variation, Advantages and Disadvantages—Indian Practical Philosophy—A sublime Prospect—An interesting Breakfast—Settlement of the Banks of Long Reach—Description of them—Passage to Marietta—A dangerous Fall—Little Muskingham River—Marietta, a flourishing Town deserted—Ship Building, and Commercial Enterprise—Has the only Church from Pittsburg, One Hundred and Eighty Miles distant—The Laws strictly enforced—Its Tradesmen, Generals, Colonels, Majors, &c.

Marietta, State of Ohio, May, 1806.

I WAS roused at a very early hour by the *Mandan Chanticleer*, but as the fog was not off the waters, I de-

ferred my departure till it was in some degree dispersed by the solar rays. I have known the fog remain till twelve at noon, and even for two or three hours after. At such times, the navigation is more dangerous than on the darkest night. The channel, islands, rocks, ripples, snags, sawyers, and a variety of other dangers, are not visible. The true channel cannot be seen, nor the true current observed; and, possibly, owing to the density of the atmosphere, the noise of the waters beating against objects necessarily to be avoided, remains drowned and unheard. I might with truth remark, that navigating at night, is, in many respects, safer than in a foggy day. For at night, the noise of water in falls and ripples, and against rocks and impediments, is heard at a much greater distance than it is on the finest day, much less on one, when sound would be retarded by vapour, and corrupted air. I have heard the water roar on a fine night to such a degree, as to impose a belief that I was immediately approaching a dreadful fall, or tumbling cataract. After running two hours, nearly ten miles, with the utmost precaution, and constant look out, I found the terrific noise to proceed from the current dashing through the top of a tree, whose root had got fast near the bed of the stream. In the day I have often seen a large tree almost erect, and in a similar situation; but the noise the passing water made over it, was only to be heard when close at hand. These facts, though I do not presume to account for them, are equally singular and fortunate; at night, the navigator is warned of danger he cannot see: in the day, he beholds a danger which cannot be heard. There are, however, two alarming peculiarities belonging to the night, which should not go unnoticed. 1st, The current differs considerably in character from the current of the day. In the day, its breadth is contracted often, to within the width of the boat, or less; and it delights in holding a favourite shore—so much so, that it is difficult to steer clear of the bank, which, after caressing some hours, it hastily abandons makes nearly across, as if to enjoy, for a certain time, the beauties of the opposite shore.—In the night, the current diffuses itself more generally—spreads out, and finally reaches the middle of the river, where it maintains itself with grace and majesty till the morning, when it contracts in sphere, increases in power, and alternately visits either bank. Were there no obstacles in the middle of the river, this circumstance of a nocturnal current, varying from the daily channel to the centre, would be highly favourable; but as

islands and sand-bars, every three or four hours occur, it becomes dangerous. I must confess my ignorance of the latent principle which occasions the variation of current. My loose opinion on the subject, is derived from observing, that in the day, the air, *nearly always*, has an inclination to come up the river, or to traverse it from side to side: and its action is also so high as to be seen on the leaves of the trees, when the surface of the water is entirely unruffled. Whereas, at night, as the inclination of the air is always down the river, when unaffected by storms; and as the volume, density, and weight of the air, are augmented to an incalculable degree, by the absence of the sun, and the descent of his exhalations, it may be presumed, that these great changes in the direction and power of the atmosphere, may operate a change on the current of the waters. The more so, as it is known that the air and body of vapour, rejected by the sky, after the setting of the sun, seek for the centre of rivers, and the sinuosities occasioned by valleys or creeks. This body of air, then of power, course, and volume, so superior and contrary to that of the day, pressing on the centre of the river, either causes there an additional current, or by some secret law of attraction, draws the current of the day from the side to the centre. I find the observation made by all navigators to be, that a boat makes *much* more way at night, than in the day; and that it holds the middle of the river. You perceive by this, that I am supported in my fact, but I have never met with any one who could assist me to its elucidation. As to a boat's going faster at night, I am not quite so much at a loss for an argument; having on her an increased weight of atmosphere, and a course of air not running in opposition to the water, she must proceed with more velocity, that when the sun deprives her of this pressure, and, by shifting the action of the air, gives her a contrary impetus. But why a boat holds the middle of the river at night, in an apparent current, whose principle is dissipated on the return of day, I cannot determine; and what I have said, you are to consider as loose hints, and not as the result of systematic and philosophical opinion.

The second alarming peculiarity belonging to nocturnal navigation, is in the falsity of vision, and the little dependence which can be placed on the judgment, in regard to the distance, character, extent, and even nature of objects. I have heard of a man, who ran his boat on the point of an island, mistaking it for an object, which, for upwards of

an hour before, he had imagined floating before him. And more than once, on hearing the roaring of water, or apprehending some other danger below me, I have dropped down six miles while pulling for safety into a shore on which I thought I could have cast a biscuit, when I first began to work across the stream. At other times I have been greatly deceived, on making land at night, as to my opinion of the nearest bank, after taking the nearest for the most distant; and after, on preferring the most distant, I have run the boat's head against a bank I calculated far from me. My poor Mandanian, Cuff, whom I have more than once introduced to you, seeing me perplexed at a moment of expected danger, to know what shore to pull to, jumped on the roof of the boat, and giving it a sudden stroke with an oar, listened to the returning sound. The left shore first repeated the stroke; and next, after a small interval, the right. "The left shore," said Cuff, with a modest confidence, "is but three hundred yards, and the right a mile from us." He was perfectly correct: I was grateful to him for his instruction, nor could I check an idea, that the Whites theorise on philosophy, while it is practised by the Indian: neither could I resist looking for farther instruction; and asking him whether his rule held good on all occasions? he replied, as I might well have conceived, "It did not: that the echo in some few parts of the river never answered at all; and, that in damp or rainy weather, it also failed telling which was the nearest side." I am confident, that in general, the rule is good and beneficial. So much for a digression: it is surely time to proceed.

It was eight o'clock in the morning before the fog began to disperse, in a sufficient degree to encourage my departure with safety. I then began to form some idea of my situation, and of the view before me. To do this with the more precision, I paddled my canoe into the middle of the river, first sending the boat on before me, directing her to keep the right bank, and to look well out. I no sooner gained the centre, than I perceived that the part of the river I occupied, was about a mile broad, bounded with high hills, crowned with sumptuous trees, and the banks decorated with the most beautiful flowers. I could with difficulty make these few observations before my canoe drifted into the part called the commencement of the *Long Reach*, on which the river appeared metamorphosed, as if by enchantment: it became not less than three miles wide; the mountains bended off to the right and left, and subsided into fine wooded ground,

and an object like a man of war in full sail, moved majestically in the centre. This very interesting vision arose from the looming of an island directly before me, and in the timbers of which, some reluctant fog was yet lurking. I worked to the left shore, and had an uninterrupted view down the Long Reach to its extremity, where it appeared bounded by a mountain of extraordinary height. In the middle was a chain of islands, which divided this lovely portion of the river into two channels of unparalleled beauty and exactitude. The right-hand channel in particular, which is considerably the best, is straight as an artificial canal, deep as a lake, and smooth as glass. I crossed over to it between the extremities of the first and second island, and on entering it could see through the vista, formed by the narrow part of the river, which concludes the Long Reach, a distance of eighteen miles.

The banks being comparatively low, are settled by many families, who build their houses, and cultivate their lands, in such a manner as to contribute vastly to the general interest of the scene. Corn-fields, pasture-grounds, herds of cattle, ascending smoke, the voice of man, and the varied noise of domestic animals, relieved my thoughts from the overwhelming impression they at first received, on the observance of Nature in a character so new and inexpressibly sublime. Happy to have an opportunity of unbending my mind, after such solitude, admiration, and reflection, I paddled down the stream, passed my boat, which was proceeding at between three and four miles an hour, and dropped down to a house which had a neat appearance, and a something which indicated comfort.—I drew my canoe up the bank, went to the house, and soon discovered I was not very wide in my judgment. A clean and orderly looking family sat at a breakfast composed of maize and milk. "Good morrow, stranger," (was uttered involuntarily by all) "how fares it?" continued an old man, "have you broke your fast this morning? if not, we have but just sat down." I made little other reply than that of drawing a stool, sitting to table, and helping myself very plentifully in a cedar bowl handed me by one of the family. When it was perceived that my appetite was somewhat appeased, by the sweetest breakfast I think I ever ate in my life, the usual questions were put to me; but not put in the impertinent and intrusive way of the eastern states, to discover the extent of one's property and private views, but merely as a species of chit-chat, or sort

of rural good breeding, to engage attention, pass time, and divert the mind. I said the usual questions, presuming you know they consist of How goes it, stranger? Where are you bound? Are you from the old country? What part? &c. Having answered these inoffensive questions as much to their satisfaction as my time would permit, I in my turn reversed the tables, and poured in my regular series of queries, which produced the following few remarks.

The banks of Long Reach were partially settled in consequence of the excellence of the land, and the retreat of the mountains into the back country, leaving several fine plains of five miles extent, running to the water; whereas on most other parts of the river, the mountains bound the water board so close, that there is seldom sufficient left for the purposes of improvements and agriculture on a large scale; if bottoms be excepted, which sometimes contain several thousand acres, but they are for the most part unhealthy, having no vent towards the adjacent country, and being formed of decayed vegetable, and other substances, as well as being subject to occasional inundations. The climate of Long Reach has been another motive of preference. It is supposed cooler in summer, in consequence of its being more exposed and open than other parts, and more temperate in winter, than places where hills and mountains attract rain and cold from the clouds. An extraordinary proof of some difference existing in the climate is, that there are trees and shrubs now growing in the islands and on the bank of Long Reach, which are only found three hundred miles above, and two hundred below it. Of the three islands in the Reach, one of them produces little else than fir or pine, which flourishes in great perfection, though no other island in the river furnishes a single stick of it, nor is any of such excellence nearer than the head waters of the Monongahela. The shrubs distinguishing the Reach, are the arbutus, and the honey locust, neither of which are to be found above, though they grow lower down the river, about two hundred miles. The crops never fail, and yield more than four times the quantity known in the Atlantic states; but owing to the distance of the market, the imposition of the itinerant purchasers, and the low price and wretched articles they give for produce, the profits are inferior, and for a certain part of the produce, such as fruit, vegetables, and poultry, there is seldom any sale. The advantage these settlements enjoy over the Atlantic farms, is, that they require less labour, no manure, and lie adjacent to plenty of fish and game.

The Reach (to use the old man's words) is moderate healthy. Fevers, however, are perfectly well known, and intermittents are annually heard of. On the whole, to come to some general conclusion, I think the Long Reach a very distinguished part of the Ohio; it is exposed to a free circulation of air; the shore is of a clean gravel; the banks are low without being swampy; the wood is ornamental as well as useful, and fine rich plains extend to the mountains, equal to the most extensive speculations in agricultural and rural pursuits. I venture to predict, that the Reach will one day become the seat of a great town: if that happen, the land will increase in estimation; at present it sells for but two dollars per acre, and that to be paid by four annual instalments!

My entertainers were Germans. We parted with many expressions of good will. The old man came down with me to my canoe, and when I had taken my seat and paddle, launched me with a push into the stream. The day was calm, the sun shone hot, but I went with such rapidity down the current, that I felt sufficient air to give a tolerable coolness. It took me however two hours to recover my boat, which I at length moored ashore, and indeed might have passed it, had my attention not been attracted by the more than stentorian voice of Cuff, who hailed me with the cry of Sago! Sago! Master." Owing to the great taciturnity of the Indians, they make particular words express a variety of sensations; hence the small word "Sago," implies joy and satisfaction at an unexpected meeting. I pulled into shore, and enquiring the motives of the boat not continuing her course, found that my servant had got alarmed at the length of my stay, and perhaps his fears arose out of the dreadful stories told him by Cuff, of the terrific nations who formerly lived on the borders of the Long Reach, and whose remains, if still in the neighbourhood, might take me prisoner, carry me to the woods, and after certain scalpings and tortures, offer me up in sacrifice to the god of their fathers, and the spirit of the lakes. Having chid the one for telling such foolish stories, and the other for attending to them, we cast off the boat, and being determined to reach Marietta that night, I took the helm, minutely observing the current, and worked hard the oars. It is not a little singular, that the *sortie* from the Long Reach exactly resembles the *entré*. On looking back, the eighteen miles of the narrow passage of the river represents a vista, the tops of whose trees appear to join; and in looking forward, what exhibited a contracted

but beautiful avenue at a distance, opens into the ordinary breadth of the river, which again becomes guarded by high mountains, immense rocks, and all the insignia peculiar to the water above Long Reach.

The water runs a mile an hour faster between the Reach and Marietta, than it does in the Reach itself. This of course, is to be attributed to the contraction of the current, and to a few ripples and islands in the way, which force the stream into a small compass, and increase its action on bodies floating on its surface. I found I went between six and seven miles an hour in common; between eight and ten, on passing particular points and islands. This gave me great hopes of arriving at an early hour. It was fortunate that I gave myself so much active occupation, for the river afforded few objects for mental amusement.

The contraction of the river, the height of its boundaries crowned with stately trees, and the inaccessibility of its surface to the direct rays of light, give it a solemn and gloomy aspect, and this effect was considerably augmented by the consequent colour and depth of the water, which appeared in many places an abyss, black as Erebus. On passing through that portion of the river which inspires the most painful solemnity, I arrived at a chain of islands, called the Brothers, ran down the right hand channel, and on reaching the foot of the last island, perceived a fall in the river, and that the current wore through it in the form of a Z. The channel was very little broader than the boat, confined between rocks, the slightest touch against which would dash her to pieces. I ordered the men to keep a steady stroke, not on any account to abandon the oars, or to be alarmed at the noise of flood. The boat instantly took the first suction of the fall, increased in velocity to a great degree, passed through all the mazes of the channel till she came to the last descent, when tumbling, tost, and regardless of her helm, she spun round and round, and at length shot ahead down the stream. Astonishing country! Here again the hills subsided, the force of nature smiled, the current diffused, and the river became a perfect calm. On looking back to contemplate the danger I had just escaped, I could but faintly see the foaming surge, or hear the horrid clamour. I never experienced a more eventful moment than in the passage of that fall. Several times my steering-oar worked so hard as to pitch me nearly overboard, and at one bend of the channel I bore so hard to port, that I touched a rock, from which all my exertion could but barely wear the boat's head. I learn-

ed from the danger I there experienced, that I wanted another hand, whose office should be to stand at the head of the boat, and on approaching a rock, in the mazes of a fall, bear against it with a long pole and assist the helm when wearing round. I strongly recommend a fourth hand. Many of the accidents which occur in the river are owing to the want of a sufficient number to navigate boats. I have bought this correction from experience.

By seven o'clock in the evening I reached a much wished for place, a river called the Little Muskingum, which I knew to be within six miles of Marietta. Having passed this small river, which flows into the Ohio on the right hand side, and run down along an island, low, yet beautiful, called Durat's, and having reached its foot in one hour, I rowed hard across to the right, where I made fast under a high bank on which stood the flourishing town of Marietta.

Marietta is situated at the confluence of the Great Muskingum, a fine navigable river, with the Ohio. The progress of this town and the adjacent settlements was, for several years, much impeded by Indian wars; but the town now bids fair to become a place of considerable importance, to which it is well entitled by the beauty of its situation as well as to its being inhabited by New-Englanders, who, notwithstanding the contractions of their habits and principles, it must be allowed, are a people of uncommon industry and speculative enterprise.

The inhabitants of Marietta are among the first who have exported the produce of the Ohio country, in vessels of their own building. The first attempt was made a few springs ago with a brig about eighty tons burden, bound for Jamaica, and commanded by an old and well known mariner, commonly called "Commodore Whipple." The success which attended that voyage, has roused the spirit of enterprise among the wealthier class, so that there are now three vessels building, one of which is about two hundred and twenty tons, and several have gone off loaded since the first brig. Besides, an agent from the United States is now here contracting for the construction of several gun-boats, to be completed by the ensuing spring.

The town, consisting of about one hundred and sixty houses, frame and brick of the neatest workmanship; is seated on each side of the Muskingum, over which there is a ferry. The site is a very fine plain, running about a mile from the Ohio to a very high chain of mountains which continue for upwards of thirty miles into the back country. The extent of these mountains, and the want of large tracts

of good land in the immediate vicinity of the town, must retard the population of the neighbourhood, and in fact hinder the place from ever attaining to a great degree of magnitude. Nor is the country at the back of these mountains healthy; several who retired behind them died of flux and fever, and several have returned sick and disgusted with the place, saying that it is all either mountain or swamp, till towards the sources of the Muskingum, where there is excellent land, but a climate too fatally unhealthy, and the price of produce entirely too low.

Marietta is also a port town, issues a weekly paper, and possesses an academy, court-house, prison, and church. The latter edifice is the only one of the kind between this and Pittsburg; a distance of one hundred and eighty-one miles. If justice be impotent on the opposite Virginian shore, and morals and laws be trampled upon and despised, here they are strengthened by authority; and upheld, respected, and supported by all ranks. The New-England regulations of church and magistracy are all introduced and acted on to the full extent—to a point bordering on an arbitrary exaction. Every family, having children, or not, must pay a certain annual sum for the support of a public school: every person, whether religious or otherwise, must pay a fixed sum towards the maintenance of a minister of divine worship; and all persons must pay a rigid respect, and a decided observance to the moral and religious ordinances of the Sabbath. In consequence, never was town more orderly or quiet. No mobs, no fighting, no racing, no *rough and tumbling*, or any thing to be observed but industry, and a persevering application to *individual* views. The Virginians, who at times visit the town, remain for a short period, and return to their own shores astonished at the municipal phenomena they witness, and wondering how man could think of imposing on himself such restraints.

As I before observed, the original settlers of this town and neighbourhood were New-Englanders, and many of them old continental officers, and officers who remained in the country after the Indian war. Some few of them still live; but in situations very different from their former ones. This leads a stranger into a variety of error and misconception. Yesterday I was speaking rather harshly to a man who had not fulfilled an agreement with me to caulk my boat, when a gentleman came up and accosted him with, "Ah! General, how do you do? I mean to dine with you. What's your hour?" I made use of this opportunity to go on to the baker in pur-

suit of some biscuit. I found him at home. On seeing the bread I began to comment on the price and quality, and might have betrayed some little dissatisfaction and incivility, had not a third person entered opportunely to say, "Colonel, I want a loaf of bread." My next call was on a butcher, whose sorry dirty looking meat made me neglectful of my late experience, and I raved without any consideration of propriety and decorum, till brought to a sense of misconduct and absence of breeding by a negro, who, taking me aside, very kindly warned me that the *butcher* was a *judge*, and that he could fine folks for cursing and swearing. Hemmed in on every side, I resolved to mend my manners and gain some instruction on the subject. I consulted my landlord, whom I found to be also a major of the late army. His lessons were short: "We, majors, colonels, and generals," said he, "are so cheap and common here, that people don't mind us *no more than nothing*." Do you follow their example: live without constraint, and get your business done, as though you were dealing with knaves, and the most common race of men. Our title signifies but little. For the most part it is used towards us from familiarity, derision and contempt. Those who *really* respect us, say, Tom, Dick, or whatever else we may be called." But the judge, said I, how is he to be treated? "When in his character of butcher," said the major, "he is treated rough enough, and without any ceremony; but when in court, and sometimes on Sundays, the citizens say, "Your Honour," and touch their hat.

As I propose writing again from this place, I may now conclude, not without an apprehension that my letter has already attained a tiresome and immoderate length.

LETTER XIV.

Marietta—An Inundation—Fort Harmer—Indian Antiquities—Be a Lover of Truth—*The Axiom of the Western World—Indian Tradition—An Anecdote—An Excursion—The Muskingum River—A Prospect—Discovery of a Vault—A beautiful Tesselated Pavement, and other remarkable Remains of Indian Antiquity—Large Human Skeleton and other curious Antiques—The Depository of the Remains of a Chief in ancient times—The Author's Remarks on these Remains of Antiquity—Predilection of the Indians for tall and robust Chiefs—Wild Turkeys.*

Marietta, June, 1806.

I MENTIONED in my last, that this town is built on a very high plain, inclined to the mountain, and that the part of the bank on which it more immediately stands, is near sixty feet above the surface of low water. I should have been satisfied that the situation was admirably calculated for the comfort and health of the inhabitants, and would possibly have recommended it as the best site I had yet seen for a city, had I not perceived, while at breakfast this morning, that the parlour in which I sat, was distinctly marked all round with a water-mark, from seven to eight inches high. As I could by no means admit the idea of inundation, I could in no manner account for the appearance; and was compelled to seek information from others. I give you the result of my enquiries.

In the spring of 1805, the Ohio and the Muskingum rose at the same time, to a more than ordinary height. The first flowed in a volume so impetuous across the mouth of the latter, that it entirely stopped its course, and forced a return of the water by the revolving instrument of a newly-created counter-current. The Ohio remaining for near six weeks as a strong wall and rampart against the mouth of the Muskingum, caused that river's waters at length *to back* and multiply to such a degree, that they overflowed its banks, and inundated every plain to which it could gain access. This inundation being obstructed by the mountain in the rear of Marietta, was thrown towards the

Ohio, and taking Marietta in its course, did great injury to the town; destroyed gardens and fences; carried off several frame-houses not firmly attached to the ground, and swept away every loose object, and every living thing not endowed with the faculty of holding on, and of consulting the best means of self-preservation. The flood descending rapidly into the Ohio, did her bank considerable injury; wore it into canals and gullies, and abridged the quay and promenade of the inhabitants. I consider this event as very alarming: its recurrence may, in some future period, with redoubled force, bear off the town and bank, "leaving not a wreck behind."

Fort Harmer, erected by the Americans when subjugating the Indians, is situated on the Muskingum, opposite to this town, and the town itself has in its centre the remains of an old log-guard, built at the same time, and for similar purposes.

Whoever delights in Indian antiquity, should explore this neighbourhood, and give the world some minute and historical sketches of the variety of its remains, said to consist of camps, forts, burial-grounds, &c. &c. As this must be a work of time connected with much perseverance, erudition, and interest, it is entirely out of my province; and I must leave it to those whose curiosity, leisure, and intelligence, may concur to induce them to make such interesting researches. Notwithstanding, I could not leave the place without taking a ramble to the spots where, by tradition, the monuments of Indian antiquity were said to abound:—the places pointed at, were the banks, hills, and head-waters of the Muskingum. You may be surprized to find me put so much faith in tradition, which you may conceive to be nothing more than fables founded on superstition, and clothed in the garb of an obscure mystery, calculated to deceive and mislead the multitude, with the view of working on their passions, and reducing them to an observance of certain rites, habits, and moral or religious institutions. This definition may apply to the traditions of the Eastern, but not to those of the Western world. Of the few axioms which compose the system of savage instruction, this is the principal, "*Be the lover of Truth.*" It is natural then to believe that the traditions of a people so instructed should be grounded on a fact, and though that fact might be disguised by embellishment, and strained by fancy, its immutability remains inviolate, and continues for ever the same. I am strengthened in these opinions, by the following anec-

dote, which also proves, that a geographical accuracy exists in tradition, equal to the most historical guide.

A barrow of considerable extent and magnitude exists in a remote part of Virginia, and several miles distant from any public road. That portion of the country was formerly the property of a nation of Indians, who, driven from their possessions, crossed the mountains, descended towards "the land of the sleeping sun," and finally pitched their tents in the plains of Indiana, where the Great Spirit was often known to dwell, and to interpose his strength in favour of the unhappy.

After a lapse of eighty years of continued sufferings and adversity; after the conclusion of the Indian war, carried on by the States with the design to annihilate the Indian name and power, a party of the descendants of this nation proceeded through Virginia with an interpreter, to Congress, in order to demand their rights, or to sue for a remuneration of those so unjustly violated, and torn from them. On coming into the latitude of the barrow of their ancestors, where were deposited "the bones of their fathers," they struck to it directly through the woods, without any instructions or inquiry; and having staid about it some time, with expressions which were construed to be those of sorrow, they returned to the high road, which they had purposely left for several miles, to pay this solemn and pious visit, and then pursued their journey.

Can you now deny some degree of belief to Indian tradition? Surely this anecdote is of the finest interest, and induces the mind not only to belief but to admiration; and to every sentiment which distinguishes the moral and human part of the world.

Having made arrangements for an absence of a few days, I provided myself with an excellent tinder-box, some biscuit and salt, (articles absolutely necessary to an explorer) and arming Cuff with a good axe and rifle, taking myself a fowling-piece oft tried, and followed by a faithful dog, I crossed the ferry of the Muskingum, having learned that the left hand side of that river was the most accessible, and the most abundant in the curiosities and other objects of my research. The Muskingum is two hundred and eighty yards wide at its mouth, and two hundred yards at the lower Indian towns, one hundred and fifty miles upwards. It is navigable for small batteaux, to within one mile of a navigable part of Cayahoga River, which runs into Lake Eric.

On traversing the valley between Fort Harmer and the mountains, I determined to take the high grounds, and after some difficulty ascended an eminence which commanded a view in one direction from off the river into the Ohio; in another up the river a few miles, and over a large tract of hilly back country; and, nearly directly across the Muskingum could be seen Marietta; her gardens, poplar trees, ship-yards, public buildings, and her highly cultivated plains, extending in a narrow breadth along the Ohio many interesting miles. After a very short inspection, and cursory examination, it was very evident that the spot on which I stood, had been occupied by the Indians, either as a place of observation or a strong-hold. The exact summit of the hill I found to be artificial: it expressed an oval (agreeing with the natural form of the foundation) forty-five feet by twenty-three, and was composed apparently of earth and stone, though no stone of a similar character appeared near. The base of the oval was girded by a wall in a state of too great decay to justify any calculation; and the whole was so covered with heavy timber, and a bed of such thick bars, that I despaired of gaining any farther knowledge, and would have instantly left the place, had I not been detained by Cuff, whom I saw occupied in endeavouring to introduce a pole in a small opening between two flags near the root of a tree which grew on the crown of the oval or summit of the hill. He told me he was sure that he had found the burrow of a ground-hog, or rattle-snake's nest, and as I had brought no provision but biscuit, it might be well to look out for supper in time. Though this fare was not of a very inviting nature, or consistent with my feelings and habits, I gratified the fellow's whim, and assisted him to remove, first, all the leaves and rubbish, and next the large stones, under which we expected to find a litter of wild pigs, or a nest of rattle-snakelings.

The flags were too heavy to be removed by the mere power of hands. Two good oak poles were cut in lieu of leavers and crows. Clapping these into the orifice first discovered, we weighed a large flag stone, and on tilting it over, we each assumed a guard, and waited a few moments, in silent expectation of hearing the hissing of vermin, or the rustling of beasts. Nothing was heard. We resumed our labour, cast out a number of stones, leaves, and earth; and cleared a surface seven feet by five, which had been covered upwards of fifteen inches deep, with flat stones, principally lying on each other with their edges pointing above the ho-

rizon. The surface we had cleared offered insuperable difficulties. It was a plain superficies composed of but three stones of such apparent magnitude, that Cuff began to think we should find under them neither snake nor wild hog. "If we look for supper under these stones," says my humble companion, "the moon will shine on an empty stomach, and that is not lucky the first night of a voyage." Having once begun, I was not to be diverted from the task. Stimulated by obstruction, and animated by other views than hogs, snakes, and supper, I had made a couple of paddles of hickory shovels, and setting to work, undermined the surface; and, after much toil and exertion, slid the stones off, and laid the space open to my view. I expected to find a cavern. In fact, my imagination was warmed by a certain design, I thought I discovered. The manner the stones were placed led me to conceive the existence of a vault filled with the riches of antiquity, or crowded with the treasures of the most ancient world. A bed of sand was all that appeared under the flags I cast off, and as I knew sand not to be nearer than the bed of the Muskingum, a design was again so manifest as to encourage my proceeding, and the sand, which was about a foot deep, was soon removed. The design and labour of man was now unequivocal. The space out of which these materials were taken, left a hollow in an oblong square, lined with stones, on the ends and sides: and paved with square stones, on the apparent bottom or upper surface, exactly fitting together, in diameter about nine inches. I picked these up with the nicest care, and again came to a bed of sand, the removal of which left my vault, as it now evidently shewed itself, near three feet deep, presenting another bottom or surface composed of small square cut stones, fitted with such art, that I had much difficulty in discovering many of the places where they met. These displaced, I came to a substance, which, on the most critical examination, I judged to be a mat or mats in a state of entire decomposition and decay. Reverence and care increasing with the progress already made, I took up this impalpable powder with my hands, and fanned off the remaining dust with my hat. Great indeed was my recompense for this industry! Grand was the reward of my persevering labour and strengthened hopes! There appeared before me; there existed under my feet, a beautiful tesselated pavement of small coloured stones: the colours and stones arranged in such a manner as to express harmony and shades, and to pourtray the full-

length figure of a warrior, under whose feet a snake was exhibited in ample folds. To tread on a pavement of such exquisite beauty and workmanship, formed by hands centuries ago, and by the ancestors of a race of people now rejected and despised, could not be done without an awful emotion.

Overcome by feelings I could neither combat or suppress, I remained for some time silent and inactive, and at length rose out of the vault, to recover my usual energy and strength of mind. I had also spent the best part of the day; evening was fast approaching, and I had formed no plan for the accommodation of the night. I resolved to remain where I was. A good fire being made, I sent Cuff with the rifle into the woods, that is, into a part which appeared likely to harbour wild turkeys, and directed him to *steer* for my fire on his return, and not to remain after the fall of night. Overjoyed at the prospect of his excursion, he had not left me two minutes before he commenced his notes. They at first appeared high and multifarious, or without any ultimate end, but before he had gone three hundred yards, they subsided into the proper modulation of a parent turkey calling around her tender young. From this he never varied while he could be heard.

Left to myself I felt more at liberty. Like a miser, I wished, uninterrupted to examine my treasure. I again descended into the vault, occupied with the desire of being able to separate the pavement in such a manner, and to imprint on every stone such marks as would enable me to put it together at any future period, and bring it home for the advantage and delight of the curious world. I had made but very little progress before I discovered the impracticability of my intention. No part of the pavement was exactly of the tesselate character, except the space between the outlines of the figures and the sides and ends of the entire space. The body of the figure was composed of dyed woods, bone, and a variety of small bits of terreous and testaceous substances, most of which crumbled into dust on being removed and exposed to the open air. My regret and disappointment were very great, as I had flattered myself that the whole was stone, and susceptible of being taken up in high preservation. Little more than the actual pavement could be preserved; it is composed of flat stones, one inch deep, two inches square, and the prevailing colours are white, green, dark-blue, and pale spotted red: all of which are peculiar to the lakes, and not to be had nearer.

They are evidently known and filled with a precision which proves them to have been but from one common example. The whole was affixed in a thin layer of sand, which covered a large piece of beech-bark in great decay, whose removal exposed what I was fully prepared to discover from all the previous indications, the remains of a human skeleton of uncommon magnitude, extended in a bark shell, which also contained, 1st. An earthen urn, or rather pot of earthen ware, in which were several small broken bones, and some white sediment. The urn appears to be made of sand and flint vitrified, rings like a rummer glass, holds about two gallons, has a top or cover of the same material, and resists fire as completely as iron or brass. 2. A stone hatchet with a groove round the pole, by which it was fastened with a withe to the handle. 3. Twenty-four arrow points made of flint and bone, and lying in a position which betrayed their having belonged to a quiver. 4. A quantity of beads, round, oval, and square; coloured green, black, white, blue, and yellow. 5. A conch shell, decomposed into a substance like chalk. This shell is fourteen inches long and twenty-three in circumference: larger than any other I have seen or heard of the kind. 6. Under a heap of dust, and tenuous shreds of feathered cloth and hair, a parcel of brass rings cut, by an art unknown to me, out of a solid piece of that metal, and in such a manner that the rings are suspended from each other, without the aid of solder or any other visible agency whatever. Each ring is three inches in diameter, and has an horizontal circumference half an inch wide, on both sides of which are strongly etched, a variety of characters resembling Chinese, the decyphering of which, my scanty erudition has no pretensions to reach.

Of the skeleton I have preserved a small part of the vertebral column: a portion of the skull; a part of the under jaw, inclosing two grinders of great size; the bones of the thighs and legs, and some melecarpi of the hands and feet. The ribs, clavicles, vertebræ of the neck and spine, &c. were nearly an impalpable powder, or entirely consumed. Judging from comparison and analogy, the being to whom these remains belonged could not have been less than seven feet high. That he was a king, sachem or chief of a very remote period, there can be no manner of doubt. The distinction, ingenuity, labour, and care, wich which he was buried, and the mausoleum constructed for him alone, on an eminence above the multitude, and its disregarded dead,

proclaims this beyond dispute; and, from the subjects found in the interments, the following (at least, and perhaps many more) useful conclusions may be drawn. 1. The Indians of the most remote antiquity possessed the art of making potter's ware, in a perfection unknown to the present times, in as much as theirs is light, strong, transparent, and capable of enduring fires. 2. It does not appear that they were acquainted with the use of iron when they employed stone hatchets and flint, and bone arrow points. 3. That they had the science of impregnating stones, wood, and shells, with a variety of colours, is manifest from the pavement and beads, and figures, which have tints which we know they are by nature denied. 4. That they had a communication with the sea, though distant from them two thousand miles, or that the sea was once more in their vicinity, is implied by the conch, which contained a marine animal, incapable of subsisting in any other than salt water. 5. The tenuous shreds of feathered cloth, worked on woven hair, announce some intercourse with South America, and a knowledge of its manufactures, as the feathers of the northern birds are not calculated for show, nor are any nations north of Mexico acquainted with their fabrication. 6. That they knew the use and properties of brass is very clear, and that they could work it with skill, is equally evident. 7. If the characters on the rings be in fact Chinese, or if they bear a strong and significant analogy to them, it again justifies a suspicion which formerly prevailed, that a communication early existed between Asia and America, since destroyed by some violent agitation of the earth at the Straits of Beering, or by a reverse of climate which renders that passage inaccessible, and too difficult and cold for the powers and temperament now accorded to man. 8. If the characters on the rings be original, and unknown to any other of the nations of the earth, it must shew that the use of letters and the art of engraving were known to American tribes many ages since, and also prove that when we speak of America as a new country, on which science never shone, and in which social arts, agriculture and commerce, never flourished, we arrogate to ourselves more information than we are entitled to, and betray a presumption and ignorance for which we ought to blush. And 9. The remarkable size of the skeleton would signify that the Indians of every time were fond of associating in their chiefs, physical as well as mental endowments. That this king should unite a gigantic form to wisdom and intrepidity of heart, appears

to have been ever their favourite principle. Even the few scattered nations which still remain, and whose monarchs are elective, betray this passion in their choice, and pay much more deference to a prince of inordinate stature than to one of common magnitude. The present chief of the Osage, a warlike nation inhabiting the borders of the Missouri, is full seven feet high, and every way proportionate, a distinctive qualification well known of various other American chiefs. It is true, at the same time, that the principal of the great Miami tribe, living near the waters of Antaria, is a poor diminutive creature, called by his people, the "*Little Snake*;" but his instance is a very honourable exception to a vulgar and general predilection. The "Little Snake," during the Indian war, was the first in the council, and second to none in the field. In proportion as he became terrible to his enemies, he was the pride and praise of his friends; the title of the "Little Snake" (implying his wisdom and power to injure) was conferred upon him; he was unanimously elected chief, and the world had to witness the fine spectacle of several thousand Indians casting off their prejudices, and doing homage to virtue and the endowments of the mind.

There is no doubt but that this monument and these remains merit a more ample speculation than I have afforded them. Perhaps my few remarks may suggest to you and others ideas of a happier and more material nature. If they cause a brighter coruscation of genius to break from minds of stronger cast than mine, or if they produce arguments and philosophy of a more judicious and less feeble character than themselves, formed as they were at the moment from the impulse of feelings and the tyranny of circumstance, I shall be content, and in the place of imposing instruction, I shall be found solicitous to receive information.

I returned the particular objects nearly to their respective situations, and with the assistance of Cuff, who had but just returned, carried them in such a manner that they could not be injured by the weather or violated by other hands; it being my intention on my return down the river to secure them with care and take them into my boat.

Cuff had succeeded so well, that he had great hopes his residence among Christians had not entirely obliterated his savage virtues. His imitative powers were still in such perfection, that the wild turkeys acknowledged his voice, and the life of one of them paid for their credulity. He brought

me a fine turkey of the last year, fat, and weighing about sixteen pounds. As the night was well set in, and the day had been laborious, no time was lost in preparing supper, that is, in broiling a part of the turkey on some bright embers, and laying it on some green leaves before us, with some good biscuit, and a bottle of water from an adjacent spring. I relished this primitive entertainment as well as any of the sumptuous banquets, it has at times fallen to my lot to partake of in Europe.

The wild turkey is excellent food, and has this remarkable property, that the fat is never offensive to the stomach.

When Kentuckey was first settled, it abounded with turkeys to such a degree, that the settlers said the light was often interrupted by them. Though this may be considered a figure, still it is well known that they were extremely numerous, so much so, that he was esteemed an indifferent sportsman who could not kill a dozen in a day. Even at this time they are sold in Lexington market for half a dollar a pair. They are, notwithstanding, becoming very scarce, and, addicted as all classes of people in that state are to an intemperate predilection for destroying every living aboriginal creature, their total extinction must be near at hand. They yet abound in the Ohio state, and possibly will for many years; till it becomes more peopled.

I cannot pretend that wild turkeys differ in any striking manner from the domestic ones I have every where seen, except the length of their wings; their superior plumage, their attitude, and lively expression in walking. The cock too has a beard composed of about one hundred hairs, which hangs like a streamer from under the bick. The hair is thicker than a pig's bristle, and the length accords with the age. In the young the beard is hardly perceptible, in the old it descends more than half a foot. I have killed a wild turkey cock which weighed thirty pounds, and whose beard was ten inches long: the flesh was execrable, nearly as hard as iron, and as black as jet. The young on the contrary, are white and tender, delicate meat, and of exquisite flavour.

Wild turkeys are gregarious, the flocks from fifty to sixty. They are migratory: they winter to the southward, and return in the spring to the deepest recesses of the woods, where they construct their nests with such care and concealment, that few instances ever occur of the eggs or young being found. Where eggs have been obtained, and hatched under a domestic turkey, the young shew great disposi-

tion to thrive, and remain about the house very contentedly, till their first spring, when they rise, without indicating a previous talent for flying, into the air, take a few circles round the heads of their old friends, and make for a wilderness whence they never more return.

Having chatted with my Mandan associate for some time, on this, and other subjects, the hours were so much beguiled, that it was full time to make some kind of shade under which to rest. This was done in a few moments: two forked poles were cut and driven in the ground, six feet from each other. A third pole was cut, and placed on three forks: against this upper cross pole were laid branches so matted with shrubs, that by lying to leeward no wind could be felt, and, by making a bed of dry leaves of good depth, and keeping the feet towards the fire, no cold or inconvenience could be apprehended. For fear this preparatory business should expose you to too sleepy a visitation, and my letter to contempt, I close for the present.

LETTER XV.

Indian Incantations and Charms—Priests—Their extraordinary Knowledge and Gifts—Interesting Explanation of the Cause—Very remarkable Antiquities—Encounter with a Rattlesnake, which is killed—Deer—Wild Turkeys—Lanesville—Farther very remote and grand Antiquities—Golden Treasure found—The Bubble bursts.

Marietta, June, 1806.

I PASSED the night near the mausoleum, without any other interruption than what proceeded from the howl of hungry wolves, exasperated on seeing a fire keep from them victims they durst not approach. I also had to renew the fire, and to suffer Cuff to perform certain rites and incantations, in the manner of his country, and which had the faculty of checking the advances of snakes. He expressed these offices by stalking several times round our tent. His gesticulation was strong, and his cries horrible. He also uttered some barbarous words; described a circle on each round with the end of a stick, and, after shedding certain leaves on the circle, he concluded with three more infer-

nal yells, and then, under a decided impression or strong conviction of safety, cast himself near me on his *berth*. It would seem, that priestcraft, connected as it is in the native ministers of this country, with an affectation of sorcery and supernatural power, gains great dominion over every savage mind, and disposes to the belief and practice of every absurdity. There are, therefore, no people more under the subjugation of superstition, or who exercise such a variety of charms and exorcisms as the Indians; in the uses and particular terms and applications of which they are instructed with the utmost precision, by their priests and physicians: those two professions being always united in one character. The priests, savage and untutored as they were, saw, at a very early period, that to establish their fame, and an ample sway over the public mind, it was necessary for them on every essential occasion, to manifest infinite skill; and to prove that they were the favourite children of the Great Spirit, by his having endowed them with a portion of his power, and given them permission to display that power in public exhibitions of extraordinary miracles. Hence, from the most early ages, have they been going about healing wounds, curing inveterate diseases, and giving ocular demonstration of their dominion over all descriptions of envenomed and noxious reptiles, by suffering them to twine round their bodies, and passing through their fingers and hair, without inflicting on them any manner of injury. So complete is the tyranny they have established over rattlesnakes, and others armed with weapons equally deadly, that they lure them from their deepest retreats, and make them fly from or follow them by apparent command*.

As this preternatural knowledge and powers are exhibited in the face of day, before multitudes, the respect shown to the priest, and the observance paid their instruction and precepts, cease to be the object of surprise; and the mind fastens on a true ground for admiration and astonishment, and asks from what authority do the Indian priests derive the power of curing disease, and of subjugating the most malignant creatures of the reptile world? The question is very comprehensive, and no doubt, sufficient to invite the investigation of the learned. For my part, not having taste for elaborate discussion, or talent for metaphysical research, I am reduced to answer the question nearly in a word: "They

* It is remarkable, that in Egypt, the sect of Sadi possess similar power over snakes.—EDITOR.

derive their knowledge and their power from the great book of Nature which a beneficent God has laid open before them." On assuming the united offices of physician and priest, they soon became conscious that any attribute or reverence to be accorded to their character of priest, was to be drawn from the skill and acquirements they could display in their profession of physician. To obtain that skill, and those acquirements, they have to study Nature, and that they do with the most unwearied assiduity and application. Their own particular saying is, "*Nature produces nothing for nothing*:" implying that whatever is, *is* for some particular end and purpose. This leads them to investigate the properties of things, the qualities of plants, and the nature of simples, in order to make them subservient to their will, and applicable to their exigencies. They were evidently conducted to these interesting inquiries, and to the useful knowledge resulting from them, by observing, that the animals of the forests and fields, with whom they in a manner associated, on eating any noxious herb, had immediate recourse to a salutary one, which counteracted the poison of the other. They also observed, that many plants and herbs were purgative, others astringent. To these, and many others, they perceived animals in a state of sickness drawn by a secret impulse, whilst those in health passed them by in disgust. Animals bitten by venomous reptiles, and impregnated by the strongest virus, were seen to seek a peculiar plant to recover their energy and strength; and these reptiles in their turn have been known to betray violent apprehension at the approach of a hog, and to shew such antipathy to certain herbs, trees, and plants, as to suffer death sooner than avoid it by passing over them. Objects too have been discovered, to which snakes in particular, have such passion and attachment, that they abandon their security, and face every danger to enjoy them.

Armed with all this knowledge, the priests come before the world as persons inspired. Knowing that their science would have little eclat if known to have been acquired in the fields, and from the animals in the forests and woods, they never display any part of it without wild cries, and horrid gesticulation. Hence, whenever they administer the simple applicable to the disorder, they express cabalistical ejaculations, shrieks, and contortions, to impress on the patient's and public mind, an idea that the cure is to proceed from their mysterious proceedings, which alone gives operation and virtue to the remedies they administer. On heal-

ing sores with warm medicaments; on curing agues in baths of hot vegetable steam; on removing stitches, spasms, and plurisies by sudorifics, and the diarrhœa by astringents, &c. &c. they perform a multitude of rites, and as their patients for the most part recover, the whole is ascribed to the charm, and the people adopt the words, spells, incantations, and exorcisms of the priests, under every affliction and disease,—whether proceeding from an unknown cause, or from the bite of venomous animals. From their habits of life, Indians are often exposed to this last calamity, and the priests in consequence, have to instruct each individual to know the antidote, and to give it efficacy by gesture and incantation. They also instruct the whole tribe in a manner of sleeping in the open air, and in the utmost safety, though surrounded by snakes, not one of which dare approach them. The instruction consists in taking a stick and leaves from a certain tree; with the point of the stick describe a ring round the sleeping ground; place on the ring the leaves, and on doing this perform certain ceremonies. This process to be renewed at intervals of waking. This is all the knowledge they impart to the tribe, and this is highly efficacious and valuable; for rejecting the folly of the use of words and exorcism, merely given to convey a high notion of superior power, the antidotes and herbs pointed out, are certain cures, and the simple action of drawing a line with *a black ash stick*, and strewing on the line some leaves of the same tree, is known to be entirely sufficient to hinder any snake from crossing the line, and to deter him from interrupting any thing within side of it. So great is their terror to this timber, that they are never known to inhabit where it grows; and if a branch of black ash be suddenly cast before a rattlesnake, apprehension and fear instantly seize him; his rattle ceases; his passion subsides; and groveling, timid, yet disquiet, he takes a large circuit to pass the branch, or more probably entirely retires.

The renewal of the operation of describing the circle, and strewing the leaves, is evidently for fear the smell should be faded, or the leaves driven off by the wind.

As to the familiarity subsisting between the priests and the snakes, the principle of which they withhold from the multitude, it is to be accounted for in a way no doubt equally simple. They are, as I observed, acquainted with herbs and other substances, for which the snakes entertain the most inordinate apprehension and antipathy, or else the most decided attachment and attraction. Alternately armed

with these, the priests make them fly from, or approach them; and when their hands and bodies are washed with a decoction of the black ash-leaves or trunk, the snakes will writhe about them in a kind of suffering and terror, but never attempt to bite. Making the snakes dance, and move in a variety of forms in a certain place, is nothing more than what I have so often stated, either marking or strewing the borders of the enclosure with the object for which they entertain the greatest antipathy, or, what is more likely, the greatest terror and apprehension. I need hardly tell you, that the stick and leaves employed by Cuff were of the black ash, which he purposely brought out of the low woods for our protection. His words, cries, and features, exactly accord to the instructions given his tribe; and to them alone he attributes any virtue: the stick and leaves being only as a wand, or necessary instrument in the great work. I asked him whether he would not the next time merely describe the circle and strew the leaves? he answered, he durst not, as the Great Spirit might be angry if he attempted to take from him the power and the praise." I saw it was in vain to make him think otherwise, and deemed it almost a crime to shake such firm belief; I therefore hastened my departure, and left the mausoleum by the first light of day.

On quitting the spot, a variety of appearances confirmed my original opinion, that it had been an advanced guard picket post, or place of look-out. That the oval and rampart were not constructed for a barrow, or for an individual's monument, in the first instance, is very certain, as in either case the skeletons or skeleton would have been deposited at the base, this being the practice of all Indian tribes.

Apprehending that a camp and Indian settlement of antiquity could not be far distant, I took a north-westerly direction, leaving on my right the river, whose course was N. E. by S. W. I had walked but one hour before I arrived at a place which bore strong indications of the object of my research. It was a small valley between two mountains, which suffered the waters of a clear creek to find a passage to the Muskingum. On exploring some time, I discovered the actual remains of a very ancient settlement. They consisted of, first, a wall or rampart of earth, of about nine feet, perpendicular elevation, and thirty feet across the base. The rampart was of a semicircular form; its diameter one hundred paces, bounded by the creek. On crossing the creek, I found a similar rampart placed in such a position, that the work must have been a true circle inter-

cepted by the stream. After a minute examination, I could perceive very visible remains of elevated stone abutments of bridges, which served to connect the two semicircles in the centre, and at their divisions above and below the stream. The timber growing on the rampart, and within its circumference, is principally red oak of great age and magnitude, some of the trees in a state of decay, being not less than seven feet diameter. Second, higher up, and to where the creek runs in a very contracted channel, caused by the approach of the mountains, the sides and passage through which appear entirely inaccessible, are several mounds of earth, standing at equal distances from each other, and forming three semicircular streets, which crossed the creek, or, perhaps I may be better understood by saying, that sixty mounds, placed so as to describe portions of a very large circle, and expressing the figure of a quadrant, lay at each side of the creek: and as these two quadrants were also united together by two bridges, whose remains are distinct, when taken in one point of view, they should represent a semicircle, whose base would be exactly above the camp. On each side of the mountain, and parallel with the mounds, are two barrows nearly thirty feet long, twelve high, and seventeen wide at the base. These barrows are composed principally of stone taken out of the creek—notwithstanding here is produced timber of fine growth.

The mounds hitherto discovered in America have been taken for *tumuli*, or mausoleums of the distinguished dead—the barrows, for the common sepulchres of the multitude. The judgment on the latter subject is perfectly correct, that on the former I presume erroneous. That the mounds in question are not *tumuli*, there can be no manner of question. Their order, number, and arrangement, are such, as entirely to preclude an idea of the kind. In all probability they are the ruins of the houses of an Indian village, which, having fallen in on desertion, earth, leaves, and various substances, drifted on them by the winds of ages, filled up all inequalities, and gave them the conical figure they now possess. Their proximity to, and the protection afforded them by the circular fort, is another evidence of their having been the houses of a town, the dead of which were deposited in the adjacent barrows.

Presuming it to have been a small town, I can conceive nothing more safe or romantic than its site. The country behind it inaccessible; high mountains on each side, and a beautiful stream, valley, and fortification, in front. It is

more than probable, that the post at which I passed the night, was the advanced guard of the camp; that post could convey an alarm, if any thing important occurred on the Ohio side. Encouraging this idea, and seeing a very commanding eminence about three miles higher up, and near the Muskingum, I directly made for it, and immediately discovered it to be nearly similar to the ground on which I had slept the night before. The appearances were too strong to admit of but one opinion, which was, that it was a place of look-out, or beacon, communicating with the former one, and with the settlement I had just left. I took the pains of clearing the top of the eminence, which was more of an oblated circle than an oval, but I could not discover any stone or any mark which might lead to a supposition of its being a barrow or place of interment. The country above was hilly, yet not so high as to intercept the view for a presumed distance of twenty miles. After a hasty repast, I proceeded toward that range, and encountered nothing remarkable, if I except the immense quantity of quails I met in the valleys, thirteen of which I killed in three shots. I also saw, for the first time this season, several rattlesnakes running themselves on the south sides of stony banks. On hearing my dog bark as if at an object he durst not spring upon, and at the same time hearing a quick and irritated rattle, I passed to the direction of the noise, and found the dog running at and from a rattlesnake, whose head stood erect about four feet from a coil of several folds, and whose tail, moving with rapid vibration, was disengaged from the coil to emit a warning or deadly sound. The dog refused to be called off, and in proportion as he barked and ran in and off, the snake increased in agitation and fury; at times feigning to strike, and others casting off a wind of his coil, awaiting a grand opportunity of striking in reality. He emitted his crimson tongue with great velocity; his eyes glared fire, his head swelled to a violent degree, and his throat shone in great variety of beautiful and vivid colours. He had arrived at the acmé of his choler; he was even poising himself with the determination to give the fatal blow, when, attachment to my dog sinking all considerations of personal safety, I rushed on, and dragged him off. The poor Mandanean took the same eventful instant to strike the snake with a long stick he had prepared for the purpose. The first blow brought him down, but with unimpaired vigour, till he fastened on the stick, with the intention of wreaking on it the whole of his wrath and

vengeance. So much was he occupied by this determined spirit, and engaged on the stick, that Cuff, on giving him a blow or two more, run in and struck his head off with the axe. This last act produced a horrid effect, the body, preserving all the principles of life, described a sphere from the ground, under which a man could pass; it then assumed as many undulations as its length and volume would allow, and finally rolled along the earth till it came in contact with a tree, round which it once more coiled, and against which it beat its extremities with a violence that soon destroyed the power of action and resistance, and left the creature with unfolded involutions, exanimate round the root of the tree. The head remained attached so firmly to the stick, as not to be shaken off, nor was I disposed to make many efforts for that purpose. Cuff was tempted very strongly to carry away a piece of the snake, which he asserted to be most delicious meat, and far superior to the birds he carried in his bag. To this I could not listen, but directed him cautiously to separate the rattle from the body, and lay it carefully up. I also extended the whole animal, though he was far from being dead, and found his length to be, allowing for rattle and head, twelve feet; and his circumference over the shoulders fifteen inches. The rattle was composed of eleven joints. The head was so inflated, and expressive of much horror and poisonous malignity, that I had not courage to give it any investigation. I pursued my journey, and confess to you, without any desire of meeting a Quixote adventure. On the contrary, I had to walk several hours before I could shake off the influence of terror and the gloom of apprehension.

Reaching, by four o'clock, a very fine spring, and being considerably weary, I halted, made a fire, and dressed a few quails on the embers. In size and flavour they resemble your English partridges; but their habits and form rank them under the species of quail. Without disturbing myself respecting their natural history, I made an excellent repast, and resumed my route much refreshed, and resolved by night to gain the top of the mountain, which I had previously pitched upon and observed in the morning. On the way I was crossed by a very fine herd of deer, exactly like the European, only somewhat larger in size. They turned to gaze, and passed on a round trot till I fired a rifle-shot, which bringing one of them down, the rest went off with the speed of the wind, nor heeded Cuff, who essayed all their various plaints and cries to retard and allure them.

As evening approached, I was much pleased to come in view of a flock of wild turkeys. I wished to have an opportunity of observing their action; the one afforded me was of the best it possibly could be: they were travelling before me, therefore occasioned no loss of way. The flock consisted of about thirty-four, on the ground, searching for food: they were not considerably alarmed till I had approached them within sixty yards. They then moved on a kind of long hop and run, stopped, and as we gained on them, proceeded in the same way. On a nearer approach, they took short flights, rose above the trees, and lighted upon them at intermediate spaces of about thirty rods. At every rest I instructed Cuff to gobble in their manner. This act appeared to attract their attention and retard their flight; and, what was of more consequence, they made responses, which guided our pursuit when they were obstructed from view by the thick ombrage of the woods, and the fast approach of night. They finally went a more considerable distance; and as I judged, to a favourite place of roost. I still had the good fortune to keep in their track, and to come directly on the spot they had chosen for their rest. They rose up with much perturbation and noise, and again descended to rest. The whole gang occupied four trees, and still they rose, fell, and acted with one accord. I resolved to fire on them. I had heard, that whenever wild turkies settled to roost, there they remained in despite of all opposition. My motive in firing then was to ascertain the fact. On the first shot they all rose with great clamour about thirty yards above the summits of the trees, and as instantaneously descended direct upon them. On firing again, similar circumstances occurred, and at a third discharge no variation succeeded, nor did they betray the least disposition to depart effectually and remove their quarters. My first discharge was with ball, which brought down a very fine bird, the two last merely powder; but I regard the fact to be ascertained as firmly as if I had killed the whole flock. This dull propensity in these animals must ultimately operate to their destruction. There is no manner of doubt but, had such a flock come within reach of a sportsman of the Virginia shore, he would have brought every one of them to the ground.

We proceeded to Lancsville, where learning from the inhabitats, that the neighbourhood was surrounded by Indian remains, and they offering their assistance, we agreed to proceed together, and make one grand scrutiny and syste-

matic research. Inquiry soon instructed us in what direction to seek the most extensive ruins of the labours of former times. We found it to be five miles due west. The ruins were magnificent in a high degree, and consisted of mounds, barrows, and ramparts, but of such variety of form, and covering so immense a track of ground, that it would take ten days to survey, still more to describe them. I made out an authority however, to back an opinion I entertained, that the Indians, though they generally preferred a circular fort to all others, still built forts of a different construction, when confined by ground and other particular exigencies. In the present instance, it was evident, that the whole ruins were situated in a plain of a triangular figure, formed by the intersection of one mountain with another. Towards the angle bounded by the junction of the mountains, were placed the mounds and barrows, and in the front the ramparts, extended in the figure of a triangle, composed of two acute and one obtuse angle, the obtuse forming the centre and front of the plain. The exact length of the sides I could not ascertain, both from obstruction and their extent. I made an effort and advanced three hundred yards, but did not at all approach the conclusion of one side. Some swamps and a multitude of snakes prevented my proceeding.

The principal object was, however, to ascertain the contents of the different objects. I give you my notes. First, a large barrow to the south was thrown open by making a ditch across it from east to west. Three feet below the surface was fine mould, underneath which were small flat stones, lying regularly on a strata of gravel brought from the mountain in the vicinity. This last covered the remains of a human skeleton, which fell into impalpable powder when touched and exposed to air. Towards the base of the barrow, we came to three tier more of substances placed in similar rotation and regularity. And as the skeletons formed two rows four tier deep, separated by little more than a flag stone between the feet of one skeleton and the head of another, it is probable that the entire barrow contained about two thousand skeletons, in a greater state of decay than any I ever yet examined. In this search a well carved stone-pipe, expressing a bear's head, and some arrow flint-points, were found, together with some fragments of pottery of fine texture. Second, we perforated, and even perfectly laid open, several mounds: they contained nothing whatever remarkable, except some pieces of black substance representing mineral coal; but which, on a nearer inspec-

tion, appeared to have been wood, and to have retained every trace and character of timber but colour and weight; the one being a deep black, and the other of three times the density of ebony or iron wood. When put into a fire made by the people, it emitted much smoke, blue blaze, smell of sulphur, and very gradually consumed. Third, the rampart, though opened in three distinct places, afforded no variety. The composition was earth and stones lying in a manner that betrayed some design in the original construction. The plain, and all the artificial objects upon its surface, grew some of the heaviest timber in the western. Taking this for date, the ruins may be deemed as ancient as any in the world.

Our views effected, and on our return from the mounds, through the angular fort, our attention was attracted by a small swell on a part of the ground, which might have been nearly the centre of the fort. Some thought it a natural wave of the earth, and of this opinion I should have been, had I not perceived a remarkable singularity. Although more than thirty feet in diameter, it had on it neither shrub, tree, nor any thing but a multitude of pink and purple flowers. We came to an opinion that it was artificial, and as it differed in form and character from the mounds, we resolved to lay it open, though not before every person surmised its contents and properties. It was cast open to the level of the plain, without rewarding labour or curiosity. Vexed at such ill success, I jumped from the bank among the hands, in order to take a spade and encourage them to dig somewhat deeper. At this instant the ground gave way, and involved us all in earth and ruin! You may conceive what a cry issued from such an unexpected tomb! But it was soon followed by much mirth and laughter. No person was hurt. Nor was the fall above three feet. I had great difficulty to prevail on any person to resume the labour; and had to explore the place myself, and sound it with a pole before we could renew our pursuit. At length we removed the earth, and found that a parcel of timbers had given way, which covered the orifice of a square hole seven feet by four, and four deep, nearly under the centre of the swell or mound. That it was a sepulchre was unanimously agreed, till we found it in vain to look for bones or any substance similar to them in decomposition. At the depth of three feet, however, we struck an object which would neither yield to the spade nor emit any sound; on persevering still farther, we found the obstruction, which was uni-

form through the pit, to proceed from rows of large spherical bodies, at first taken to be stones. Several of them were cast up to the surface: they were exactly alike: perfect globes, nine inches in diameter, and about twenty pounds weight. The superficies of one, when cleaned and scraped with knives, appeared like a ball of base metal, so strongly impregnated with the dust of gold, that the baseness of the metal itself was nearly altogether obscured. The clamour was so great, and joy so exuberant, that no opinion but one was admitted, and no voice could be heard while the cry of, " 'tis gold! 'tis gold!" resounded through the groves. Having determined on this important point, we formed a council respecting the distribution of the treasure, and each individual in the joy of his heart, declared publicly the use he proposed to make of the part allotted to his share. The Englishman concluded that he would return to England, being certain, *from experience*, that there was no country like it. A German of our party said he would never have quitted the Rhine, had he had money enough to rebuild his barn which was blown down by a high wind, but that he would return to the very spot from whence he came, and prove to his neighbours that he loved his country as well as another, when he had the means of doing well. An Irishman swore damnation the day longer he'd stay in America, but gave no motive for his determination; and my Mestizo appeared to think that were he to purchase some beads, rum, and blankets, and return to his own nation, he might become Sachem, and keep the finest Syaws of it. For my part, I saw in the treasure the ample means of visiting other climes, and my imagination traversed South America, Africa, Asia, and the few parts of Europe I had not before explored. Such were our various views. The most remarkable trait they suggest, is, that though in America, and filled with all the dreams that have been related of its felicities and wealth, not one of the party had ever thought of remaining, or of making it a perpetual residence!

Reserving but one globe of gold, or at least one ball of mixed gold, we carefully secured the remainder of the treasure, and returned to Lanesville, famished and weary, yet elated, and after a hasty repast, we, with much privacy and precaution, subjected our gold to the ordeal of fire, and stood around its operation in silence, and fearful to regard each other or to breathe. The dreadful element which was to confirm or to consume our hopes, soon began to exercise

its various powers. In a few moments the ball turned black, filled the room with sulphureous smoke, emitted sparks and intermittent flames, and burst into ten thousand pieces! So great was the terror and suffocation, that all rushed into the street, and gazed on each other with a mixed expression of doubt and astonishment. The German took advantage of the interval to ask me to *lend* him a dollar, with which he walked away, without returning to examine the gold. The smoke subsided, we were enabled to discover the elements of our treasure: they consisted of some very fine ashes, and a great quantity of cinders perforated through and through. The disappointment soon wore off; we laughed heartily at our visionary views, and resolved not to be deceived by a ball of spirite another time. A ball of spirite!—It was nothing more. I understand the mountains abound with it; but how the Indians came to form it into spheres, and to preserve it in their camps, I remain entirely ignorant. They may have used them in religious rites, or in gymnastic exercises, for aught I know; or, what is still more interesting, they might have made them instrumental to purposes of war. I shall, however, extend my enquiries on this subject, and with some small hopes of success, as I learn that Colonel Ludlow of Cincinnati, has found balls of a similar composition and structure, and perhaps under circumstances that may assist to illumine their history and use.

LETTER XVI.

Little Kenhaway River—Belleprie—Bacchus's Island—Fine View of it—The House—Its elegant and interesting Inhabitants—A Rural Evening and Supper—Big Hockhocking River—New Lancaster Town—Its sudden Rise, and as sudden Decline by a contagious Sickness—Dutch Cupidity and its Consequences—Belleville Town and Island—The Devil's Creek—Letart's Falls—Danger of passing them, especially in the Night—Campaign Creek—Point Pleasant, a handsome little Town.

Point Pleasant, Great Kenhaway River, July, 1806.

THE morning after the golden vision I purchased a small canoe for two dollars, and descended the Muskingum to Marietta, without any accident or incident worth re-

cording. On my arrival at Marietta, I perceived means to remove the relics I had the good fortune to discover on the first day of my excursion, and having got them and some necessaries into my boat, cast loose, and turned once more into the current of the Ohio.

In a run of ten miles I passed no less than four islands, and two miles more brought me up to the little Kenhaway river on the left side. The little Kenhaway is one hundred and fifty yards wide at its mouth. It yields a navigation of ten miles only. Perhaps its northern branch, called Junius's Creek, which interlocks with the western branch of the Monongahela, may one day admit a shorter passage from the latter to the Ohio. Opposite to this river is the town and settlement of Belleprie, three miles from which is Bacchus's island.

On leaving Marietta a lady and gentleman who had been on a visit there, desired a passage to the island. This request was with much pleasure granted, and I had only to lament that the voyage was so short, which was to terminate my acquaintance with persons so truly interesting and amiable. The island hove in sight to great advantage from the middle of the river, from which point of view little more appeared than the simple decorations of nature; trees, shrubs, and flowers of every perfume and kind. The next point of view on running with the current on the right hand side, varied to a scene of enchantment; a lawn, in the form of a fan inverted, presented itself: the nut forming the centre and summit of the island, and the broad segment the borders of the water. The lawn contained one hundred acres of the best pasture interspersed with flowering shrubs and clumps of trees, in a manner that conveyed a strong conviction of the taste and judgment of the proprietor. The house came into view at the instant I was signifying a wish that such a lawn had a mansion. It stands on the immediate summit of the island, whose ascent is very gradual; is snow white, three stories high, and furnished with wings which interlock the adjoining trees, confine the prospect, and intercept the sight of barns, stables, and out-offices, which are so often suffered to destroy the effect of the noblest views in England.

The full front of the house being the signal for pulling in for the island, we did so immediately, and fell below a small wharf that covered an eddy, and made the landing both easy and secure. There was no resisting the friendly importunity of my passengers: no excuse would be taken:

to stop the night at least, was insisted upon, and with a convincing expression that the desire flowed from hearts desirous not to be refused. There is something so irresistible in invitations of such a nature, that they cannot be denied. I gave instructions respecting my boat, and giving the lady my arm, we walked up the beautiful lawn, through which a winding path led to the house. It was tea time; that refreshment was served and conducted with a propriety and elegance which I never witnessed out of Britain. The conversation was chaste and general, and the manners of the lady and gentleman were refined without being frigid; distinguished without being ostentatious, and familiar without being vulgar, importunate, or absurd. Before the entire decline of day we walked in the gardens, which were elegantly laid out in your country's style; produced remarkably fine vegetables, and had a very favourable shew of standard peaches, and other fruit. We next turned into the woods. I soon perceived why the island was named Bacchus. It abounds with vines which grow to great height and strength, but never produce to any perfection. The path we had taken led to the water, the border of which brought us to the boat, where it seems all the servants of the family had assembled to hear what news my people might have brought into their little world. We found them seated on the green around Mindeth, who, proud to be their historian, related tales of such peril and affright, that they gazed on him with sensations of wonder and astonishment, or with the softened emotions of pity and complaint. The poor Mandanean, excluded by his colour and aspect from participating in the social pleasures of the whites, had built himself a good fire, made himself the section of a tent, and was preparing his rod and line to catch some fish for supper. I saw the lady so pleased with this scene, and so delighted in particular, with Cuff's truly rural establishment, that I proposed supping on the shore, and by displaying a specimen of my evenings on the river, give some idea of former times, and the innocent enjoyments of primitive life. The night being perfectly fine, and the moon out, and some light clouds hindering the dew from falling, my proposition was joyfully acceded to, and instructions were given accordingly.

This determination gave life and interest to a scene which before was calm and pleasing. All was action and bustle: The historian no more attended. Every one assumed an occupation, and Cuff saw his fire and his tent surrounded by

twenty willing assistants. The lady being engaged in instructing the servants, and sending them to the house for a few necessary articles, I proposed to take the gentleman in my canoe across the current, and under the shade of the trees of the bank, with a lighted torch attract the fish to the surface, and spear them while gazing at the blaze. We crossed over, and met with the success of striking seven large cat and sun fishes in less than half an hour. We returned with the torch still burning, and the hands singing "The beauteous month of May," in cadence to the paddles, which rose and struck with a preconcerted regularity.—This mode of nocturnal fishing was quite novel to the inhabitants of this little insulated world. The lady was charmed with it, and declared that the view of the canoe by torch-light across the water, the conversation obscurely heard, the sudden bursts of exultation announcing every success, and the cheerful return with mirth and song, was an improvement of the finest sort to a scene before she deemed incapable of augmentation! After chatting some time on subjects immediately rising out of occurring incidents, and admiring the versatility of mind which at one time finds felicity in towns and midnight masquerades, and at another acknowledges happiness on the contrasted theatre of the rivers and wildernesses, we sat down to our repast, and in a short time paid it the strong encomium of a satiated appetite.

After which we returned to the house, where over a bottle of wine one hour longer we conversed on the pleasures of our rural sports, and retired to rest with that heart-felt ease and serenity which follows an innocent and well-spent day.

Next morning, after breakfast, I with difficulty tore myself from this interesting family. You will excuse me for omitting the names of the amiable couple. They were emigrants of the first distinction from Ireland.

Two hours after leaving the island, I reached the lower settlement of Belleprie, a rising place on the right hand side, three miles below which on the same side, I passed Little Hockhocking, Newbury settlement and Bar, Mastaphy island, and Big Hockhocking river, near the mouth of which I brought up, in order to make a few observations and enquiries.

The Big Hockhocking is eighty yards wide at its mouth, and yields navigation for loaded bateaux to the press place, sixty miles above its mouth. At the head of this navigation stands New Lancaster, a town formed of about one hundred and fifty well built houses, and inhabited chiefly by Ger-

mans and Dutch, from Old Lancaster in Pennsylvania, and the settlements in its vicinity. New Lancaster seven years ago was but emerging from the woods, where the industrious people I have mentioned from the east, were tempted by the reputation of the lands in its neighbourhood to settle in and around it, and to encourage all their friends to flock to the Ohio state, and follow the example they had set them, for the advancement of their comfort and promotion of their prosperity. You may judge with what eagerness the town and country were settled, when you learn that one hundred and fifty brick, frame, and log-houses were erected in less than seven years, and that land rose from one and two, to five, ten, fifteen, and even twenty dollars per acre. It has, notwithstanding, sustained a sad reverse within these two years. The last summer alone gave landed and other property a fall of one hundred and fifty per cent. This violent depreciation is to be attributed to a general sickness which attacked the settlement, and swept off two-thirds of the inhabitants, before its progress was checked by the setting in of the frost. Very few of the first settlers now exist! Seven years toil and labour concluded their reign, and in all probability seven more will extinguish the generation now rising in their place! What a gloomy prospect! what a melancholy reflection! And from whence arose a change and calamity so unexpected and painful to a liberal mind?

Avarice, and an inordinate craving after gold, form the well known characteristic of the Dutch. With them every consideration dissolves before views of acquirement, or prospects which hold out acquisitions of wealth. The first settlers of New Lancaster discovering the lands to be of the first quality, bought up several thousand acres at a reduced price, erected a few buildings, and sent emissaries to their countrymen to tempt them into their speculations, and allow them for certain advantages a participation of their views. Many came, and by acting in a similar efficacious manner, to sell their purchase, and populate the place, a few years numbered from six to seven thousand inhabitants, composed of artisans, shop-keepers, mechanics and farmers. The head of the navigation being the most profitable place on which to erect a town, it was chosen for that purpose, and its being healthy or unhealthy made no part of the calculation, or entered into the consultations on the business. Those who settled on farms chose the vicinity of creeks and springs for their habitations, for if they chose high grounds, time would be lost in looking after water,—"time is money,"

say the Dutch. Some intermittent fevers, and a few hundred deaths in the first three or four years, began to spread suspicions that all was not right: that swampy spots were pernicious to life, that the money gleaned off them could neither purchase happiness or maintain health. To build a new town, new houses and barns, and to clear new lands, were changes and expences too heavy to be endured; things remained till two successive summers teeming with disease, consumed the bulk of the inhabitants of the settlement, and compelled the few remaining ones to abandon their avaricious intentions, and learn in future how to live.

So entirely was health cast out of all consideration at the time of erecting New Lancaster, that the settlers were not turned from their intention, though a swamp of great extent, and part of which immediately bounds the west of the town, lay directly before them, and emitted an effluvia so noxious as could hardly be withstood. Nor did they reflect that another swamp of a still worse nature, called "the muddy prairie," lay contiguous, and cast out of its bowels an air so mephitic, that persons had to close their mouth and nose on crossing any part of it. Deer and other animals chaced into these swamps by hunters, sink, after a few struggles, and never more appear. The swamps will never be drained: their extent and character defy human industry; the depth alone being much greater than any adjacent streams. The prevailing disorders they disseminate, are agues, fevers, and violent retchings. The latter complaint is nearly always fatal; and is accompanied by all the symptoms of yellow fever, such as derangement, convulsions, and a general effusion of blood.

Three miles below the big Hockhocking, on the Virginia shore, I passed the town and settlement of Belleville, and two miles lower down I enjoyed the sight of a beautiful island of the same name, covered with trees, shrubs, and verdure; and after a run of ten miles farther without impediment, I arrived at a very dangerous part of the river, distinguished by the name of the Devil's Creek. In passing the creek which issues from the Virginia shore, I found it necessary to keep close round the left hand point, to avoid being thrown by the current on dangerous rocks, which lie in the bend above and below the mouth of the creek. I succeeded well, but not without seeing the danger, which required much exertion to shun.

Having lost considerable time in my late excursions, I being seduced by the fineness of the evening, and promised

lightness of the night, determined on not bringing to till I should reach this place. I therefore continued on, past Amberson's Island, Goose Island, and by midnight came up to two islands which I understood to be but half a mile above Letart's Falls, universally feared as one of the most terrific parts of the navigation of the river. The roaring of the falls had reached us sometime before we made the islands, and reflections of propriety, safety, &c. were making such progress on my mind, that I began to repent of my determination, and to feel a diposition not to proceed any farther till morning. Prudence may arrive too late. The channel past the islands was close to the right hand shore, yet I dared not put the boat's head towards it, the current being impetuous, and the shore full of trunks of trees, breakers, and snags. Perceiving obstructions which were at once difficult and arduous to remove, I made preparations to shoot the falls. The men received my instructions with a silence which augured some fear; the waters uttered the most tremendous sounds, and the mist of their dashing rising into the air, spread an apparent fog on their surface from side to side. The scene was awful: there was no alternative. I took the helm, and placing the hands on each bow with a pole to guard against rocks, followed the current to the second island, from thence to about one third of the river from the right hand shore, and there held it to the falls. The boat took chute in the most capital manner, past through like the flight of a bird, and never once turned round. In taking the chute, I observed a sunken rock to my right, that formed a very large ripple, and several others to my left, which caused the water to boil, and make a grumbling dull noise. Instantly on dropping from the falls, it was necessary to take to the oars, to avoid an eddy of great power, which sucked in logs, and every thing else within its attraction, and cast them up about two hundred yards lower down.

I arrived at Point Pleasant to breakfast, and found it a handsome little town, well situated on the confluence of the Great Kenhaway with the Ohio, and commanding a very extensive view of the latter river. It contains about forty houses, frame and log, and has not the aspect of ever being much augmented. The few disconsolate inhabitants who go up and down, or lie under trees, have a dejected appearance, and exhibit the ravage of disease in every feature, and the tremor of the ague in every step. Their motive for settling the town must have been to catch what they can from

persons descending the river, and from people emigrating from the S. W. parts of Virginia, with a view of settling lower down the river, and who must make Point Pleasant a place of deposit and embarkation. Were it not for the unhealthiness of the town, it would not be unreasonable to presume that this circumstance would render it in time a place of considerable note. Point Pleasant is two hundred and seventy miles from Pittsburg.

LETTER XVII.

Farther Particulars of the Great Kenhaway River—Lead Mines—Atrocious Massacre of Indians, the Family of the celebrated Logan, the Friend of the Whites—Its Consequences—The Battle of Point Pleasant—The Speech of Logan—Catalogue of Indian Birds—Character of the Mocking Bird and the Virginia Nightingale.

Mouth of the Great Kenhaway, July, 1806.

I FIND the Great Kenhaway to be a river of considerable character for the fertility of its lands, and still more as leading towards the head waters of James's river. Nevertheless it is doubtful, whether its great and numerous rapids will admit a navigation, but at an expence to which it will require ages to render the inhabitants equal. The great obstacles begin at what are called the great falls, ninety miles above the mouth, below which are only five or six rapids, and three passable with some difficulty, even at low water. From the falls to the mouth of Greenbrier River is one hundred miles, and from thence to the lead mines, one hundred and twenty.

The lead is found mixed, sometimes with earth, and sometimes with rock, which requires the force of gunpowder to open; and is accompanied with a portion of silver, too small to be worth separation under any process hitherto attempted. The proportion yielded is from fifty to eighty pounds of pure lead, from one hundred pounds of washed ore. The veins are at sometimes the most flattering, and at others they disappear suddenly and totally. They enter the side of the hill and proceed horizontally. Two of them are wrought by the public, the more valuable of which is one hundred yards under the hills. These would employ

about sixty labourers to advantage. There are not, however, in general, more than forty, and even these find time to cultivate their own corn. The veins have produced sixty tons of lead in a year; the average is from twenty to twenty-five tons. The furnace is a mile from the ore-bank, and on the opposite side of the river. The ore is first conveyed in waggons to the Kenhaway, a distance only a quarter of a mile, then laden on board of canoes and carried across the river, which is there about two hundred yards wide; and then again taken into waggons and carried to the furnace. From the furnace the lead is transported one hundred and thirty miles along a good road, leading through the peaks of Ottie and Lynch's ferry, whence it is carried by water about the same distance to Westham, where it finds its way by James river and the Potomac to the markets of the Eastern States. Very little of the lead ever descends the river, in consequence of the falls just below the mines, three of which have a perpendicular chute of four feet each. Three miles above the mines is a rapid of three miles continuance. Yet the obstructions might be removed for so useful a navigation, as to reduce very much the portage to James river, and facilitate the descent to the Ohio, where the mouth is two hundred and eighty yards wide.

The banks of the Great Kenhaway were once the favourite resort and residence of several Indian tribes. The ruins of their little empires every where abound. The towns from which they were banished, and the villages in which they were immolated at the shrine of insatiate avarice, ambition, and pride, have yet remains which stand, and will for ever stand, to perpetuate the memory of their sufferings and of our crimes.

I visited several monuments of Indian antiquity up the river, and had I not so lately given you ample details on those I discovered on the Muskingum, I would describe them, and even under this impression would give them notice, but they do not sufficiently differ from what I mentioned, to admit of remarks, without a tiresome tautology and repetition. I cannot leave the river, however, without telling you an old story, which took its origin on this water, and to which I feel satisfied your sensibility will not be denied.

In the spring of 1774, a robbery and murder were committed on an inhabitant of the frontiers of Virginia, by two Indians of the Shawanee tribe. The neighbouring whites, according to their custom, undertook to punish this outrage

in a summary way. Colonel Cresap, a man infamous for his numerous atrocities on this injured people, collected a party and proceeded down the Kenhaway in quest of Indians. Unfortunately a canoe of women and children, with one man only, was seen coming from the opposite shore unarmed, and unsuspecting an hostile attack from the whites; Cresap and his party concealed themselves on the bank of the river, and the moment the canoe reached the shore, singled out their objects, and at one fire killed every person in it. This happened to be the family of Logan, who had long been distinguished as a friend of the whites. This unworthy return provoked his vengeance. He accordingly signalized himself in the war which ensued. In the autumn of the same year, a decisive battle was fought at the mouth of the Great Kenhaway (in history called the battle of Point Pleasant) between the collected forces of the Shawanees, Mingoes, and Delawares, and a detachment of Virginia militia. The Indians were defeated, and sued for peace. Logan, however, disdained to be seen among the suppliants. But, least the sincerity of a treaty should be distrusted, from which so distinguished a chief absented himself, he sent by a messenger the following speech to be delivered to lord Dunmore.

"I appeal to any white man to say, if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry, and he gave him not meat: if ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not. During the course of the last long and bloody war, Logan remained idle in his cabin, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites, that my countrymen pointed as they passed, and said, '*Logan is the friend of white men!*' I had even thought to have lived with you, but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood, and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not sparing even my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it: I have killed many: I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country I rejoice at the beams of peace. But do not harbour a thought that mine is the joy of fear! Logan never felt fear! He will not turn on his heel to save his life! Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one!"

This affecting story and speech, actually delivered before lord Dunmore while governor of Virginia, are contained in Mr. Jefferson's *Notes*: the story as a preamble to the speech, which is given as a specimen of Indian eloquence, and

may vie with the most pathetic passages in the orations of Demosthenes or a Cicero. The few remains of Logan's tribe now live in a little village near the mouth of the Ohio. I shall certainly visit them on my way down.

I have been much engaged during my rambles here, in ascertaining the number and character of the birds, which are of great variety in this part, and of much brighter plumage than those I noticed at the head waters or in the Eastern States.

Between ninety and an hundred American birds have been described by Catesby, some stationary, others migratory.

Brilliant plumage is the principal superiority which any of them can claim over those of Europe. Very few of them are remarkable for their song. I know of but two that can be presumed to vie with British warblers—the mocking-bird and the Virginia nightingale. On these I shall make a few remarks.

The mocking-bird is of the form, but larger than the thrush, and the colours are a mixture, black, white, and grey. What is said of the nightingale by its greatest admirers, is what may with more propriety apply to this bird, who, in a natural state, sings with very superior taste. Towards evening, I have heard one begin softly, reserving its breath to swell certain notes, which, by this means, had a most astonishing effect, and which defies all verbal description. A gentleman residing in London had one of these birds for six years. During the space of a minute, he was heard to imitate the wood-lark, chaffinch, black-bird, thrush, and sparrow. It was also said that he could bark like a dog, and imitate every domestic animal about the house. In this country, I have frequently known the mocking-birds so engaged in their mimicry, that it was with much difficulty I could ever obtain an opportunity of hearing their own natural note. Some go so far as to say they have neither favourite note or imitations: this can be denied. Their few natural notes resemble those of the nightingale, and of infinite mellowness and strength. Their song has a greater volume and compass than the nightingale, and they have the faculty of varying all intermediate notes, in a succession which is truly delightful. In a word, to make a comparison perfectly intelligible to an English ear; the Virginia nightingale's powers may be compared to the astonishing bravuras of a *Billington* or a *Braham;* those of the natural bird to the fascinating native melodies of a *Mountain* or an *Incledon.*

LETTER XVIII.

Galliopolis, a French Settlement—Historical Account of its Rise, Progress, and Fall—Its present miserable State.

Galliopolis, State of Ohio, July, 1806.

The distance from the mouth of the Great Kenhaway being but three miles, I dropt down to this place in about an hour. That time would not be required, if the navigation were not interrupted by an island immediately in the middle channel, and several rocks which make it necessary to keep the Virginia shore till compelled to row hard across the river to gain the town.

Galliopolis being a French town and settlement which has made considerable noise in the world, I feel myself under a more immediate obligation to give you a correct and historical account of its rise, progress, and fall.

A land speculator who explored this western country a few years ago, took plans of the site of Galliopolis; surveyed two hundred thousand surrounding acres, and submitted his labours on parchment, with all the embellishments of a draftsman, and all the science of a topographer. The site for the town was represented as on a high plane of great extent and beauty, commanding views up, down, and across the river for several miles. Eminences were every where pointed out as eligible for the residence of the wealthy, and comfortable secluded spots were marked for the retreat of the more humble and indigent. Long extended and fertile tracts were noted as proper places for the exertion of the most decidedly active and industrious, and water-falls, cataracts, and rapid streams descended and flowed for the benefit of mills, the promotion of commerce, and the diffusion of prosperity and happiness. When those advantages were magnified by the high coloured machinery of hanging woods; ever verdant meads interspersed with clumps of the flowering magnolia and odoriferous catalpa; natural vineyards with purple clusters bending to the ground, and all the other interesting objects incident to sublime landscape, it may well be supposed that the gentleman's paper plans captivated the sanguine French, and formed an irresistible lure to this celestial paradise. His maps and surveys had

marginal notes illustrative of its natural history, and the buffalo, elk, deer, bear, birds, fish, and game of every description, were stated to abound in such quantity, that for several years man could subsist without any other labour than the healthy and pleasant occupations of hunting and fishing.

Furnished with testimonies of so flattering a nature, and with credentials of the first authority to the most respectable houses in Paris, he repaired to that capital, and met with all the hospitality and attention to which he was entitled by his manners, intelligence, and introductions. After associating with the great some months, he gave publicity to his views; opened, by permission of government, a regular land office; exhibited his plans and charts, and offered the lands they expressed for a French crown per acre.

The troubles then existing in France were favourable to his intentions. Those who were compelled to stifle their resentment against the state, were rejoiced at an opportunity to abandon it, and the government at length, tired with the perpetual work of the guillotine, preferred to get rid of the disaffected by emigration, to the labour of compression in dungeons or the effusion of blood.

Numerous emigrants were ready to repair to the extolled territory. Of these, a few of the most opulent, liberal, and enlightened, combined and purchased the speculator's whole right and title, and extinguished all his claim for one hundred thousand crowns, and of course assumed to themselves the disposition of the lands, and the charge of settling them, but without any pecuniary advantage. A proceeding so honourable as this in the proprietors had the most auspicious effect: in a short time, five hundred families, previously well situated, embarked with the proprietors for the United States, crossed the mountains, and descended the river to their new possessions; to "the promised land, flowing with milk and honey, and abounding with all the necessaries and luxuries of life."

The lands were distributed among them according to priority of purchase, and where it could with propriety, according to predilection and choice. Some went to subjugate the forests; some to reside on the river's banks. Some went in pursuit of mill-seats, cataracts and falls, and others contented themselves to look for flowering meadows, and aromatic groves. A considerable number remained to settle the town now called Galliopolis.

Such a body of settlers soon effected a change in the face

of nature. A very neat town quickly rose on a delightful plain, and a number of comfortable little houses adorned the best situations along the river. Having brought with them implements of husbandry and seeds of all kinds of fruit and vegetables from Europe, the colony appeared to flourish to an unprecedented degree, and to extend its fame to the widest bounds. This unexampled character and success was the operation of two years. On the third, the settlers who retired to the back country, and who did not suffer death, came in, and reported that the meadows and good lands they went in search of, proved no more than swampy intervals between mountains, where man could not exist; and that the mill-seats and water-falls were dry, except during the dissolution of the winter snows, which could only be calculated upon for the short period of about three weeks in the year.

The return of these disappointed speculators alarmed the infant town, and the river settlements spread an apprehension of the want of bread and general distress. Small patches for the gardens, and vistas to the water, were all the cleared land in the colony, for none had gone to the drudgery of preparing ground heavily timbered, for the purposes of raising corn or producing the other necessaries, which are the result only of toil and unremitting industry. Unfortunately, too, the settlers were for the most part artisans who had resided all their lives in Paris, Lyons, and other great towns in France. To labour in gloomy woods, and clear for agriculture land crowded with trees several feet in diameter, was a task incompatible with their former habits and views. A contracted system of horticulture, was all they were equal to, and as such a mode could not provide for any supernumerary mouths, the discontented were resolved to return home, and others to proceed to the Eastern states, sell their shares, and resume their ancient professions.

From the sale of the possessions, however, very little trouble arose. On the fourth year, at a time when affairs were progressing, and improvements going on with as much vigour as could be expected from emaciated mechanics and effeminated shop-keepers, a person arrived in the colony, claiming it as his own, and stating that the man who sold the property in France was an impostor. To a people already under suffering and disappointment this was a dreadful blow, that could not be averted, and which involved in its fall the ruin of their hopes, and the labour and toil of the four previous years. The new claim was sanctioned by

Congress, and a proposition was made to the French to abandon their improvements, or to re-purchase a certain quantity of land, adjoining to, and including such improvements, at the rate of two dollars more per acre. Many spurned at this proposition, however fair, and left the country in disgust, while others with large families remained, again purchased, and persevered to give the settlement a rise, in despite of disappointment, imposition, calamity, and a host of evils and difficulties which required all the energies of human exertion to avoid and to remove. Such strength of mind and perseverance merited a successful fate, and no doubt would have terminated in a happy issue, but for ponds lying behind and near the town, which often infected the air, and predisposed to fever and ague, even from the commencement of the settlement, but on the fifth year they became so contagious that many died, and several became so seriously alarmed as to throw up their improvements, and sell their titles for the little they required for travelling expences to Philadelphia or New York, where they might follow handicraft trades, and procure bread with more ease and security. Those who remained were principally the infirm and the young children: few improvements went on, the place continued rapidly to decline, and is now, at the period of my writing, in a fair way of being restored to nature, and returning to the gloom of its primitive woods. Several houses are tumbling in; several are shut up; others are burnt down; and the few that are occupied do not strike the mind with an idea that they have long to last. The total number of habitable houses is reduced to nine, about seven more are occupied in the original purchase; thus I account for sixteen families out of five hundred who came into the country a few years before, big with expectations of felicity, and dreaming of nothing less than perpetual comfort and continued happiness. The sixteen families which persist in remaining are of those who purchased a second time. They vainly imagine to make something of their improvements, and await the operation of the ponds with more fortitude and determination than judgment and good sense. They are a most wretched looking people: the worst hospital in Europe could not turn out an equal number, so capable of proving the great degree of humiliation that human nature is capable of expressing, when under the hands of neglect, disease, and indigence. So wretchedly poor is the place, that a barrel of flour is not to be had in the whole settlement, and in place of their being able to purchase some

Indian meal, I have had applications to know whether I had any to exchange for fruit and small produce.

They cultivate, as I have observed, little more than fruit and vegetables, and they depend on the exchange of these for bread and other necessaries to be had of boats descending the river. The peaches thrive and multiply so well, that one of the old settlers has procured a still, and makes a brandy, which, at a tolerable age, is of a very fine quality. He now contracts for all the peaches of the settlement; makes about four hundred gallons of peach brandy each season, which he barters for flour, corn, &c. at the rate of one dollar per gallon for the liquor, and then sells out his flour, &c. for chickens, young hogs, and garden produce, with which he supplies at a cheap rate, boats who may stand in need of such things on their passage down the river. I am very much of opinion, that were it not for the prospect of bringing the peach brandy trade into success and a profitable notoriety, Galliopolis town and settlement would be entirely abandoned.

Never was a place chosen, or rather approved of, with less judgment. In the rear of the buildings are a number of pestiferous ponds; the back country is composed of a series of barren ridges, and internal lands of dangerous swamp; and the access to the town both by land and water, is so extremely difficult, that mere matter of choice will never conduct to it a visitor, trader, or resident. I am given to understand, notwithstanding, that some New Englanders have made purchases from the fugitive French at very reduced prices, and intend occupying the farms they deserted. If they put this intention into execution, the settlement may again take an artificial rise, though it is difficult to conceive how the public can a second time be deceived in respect to a spot whose climate and properties have been so much condemned and exposed.

I am very happy to have authority to account for seventy more of the families who arrived from France, and which seventy were of those who left Galliopolis in disguise on the springing up of the new proprietor, who required them to make a new purchase or to quit the premises. Congress, much to its honour, made their case a national one, and has granted them lands lower down the river, in lieu of those they had to abandon in this place. They report to their friends that their new grounds are excellent, but that sickness and excess of unaccustomed labour keeps thinning them by no very insensible degrees.

LETTER XIX.

Various Rivers and Creeks—Saw-mills—A fine Salt-spring and an Indian Pottery—Great Sandy Creek—Central Situation of its Mouth—Erroneous Accounts of Kentuckey—Corrected—Extravagant Price of Lands—An Excursion—Vestiges of the Remains of a Chief of uncommon Size—Game—Wild Hogs—Remains of an Indian Village—An Alarm—Explained—Wolves hunting their Prey.

Mouth of Great Sandy River, July, 1806.

I LEFT Galliopolis with all the sensibility which the fate of its poor inhabitants could inspire.

In my run to this place I passed a very beautiful island, several creeks, and the mouths of the Little and Big Guiandot. The latter river is sixty yards wide at its entrance into the Ohio; is very rapid, and may be navigated seventy miles up. They both are on the Virginia shore, as well as Great Sandy river, which is between seventy and eighty yards wide at its mouth, and navigable for loaded bateaux sixty miles, till it reaches falls where saw-mills are erected, and which furnish the best cherry plank of America, in the greatest abundance. A few miles above the saw-mills a very fine salt-spring has been discovered in the mountains, whose waters are so strong, that it is said one hundred gallons could yield one bushel of salt. This spring would, in all probability, have remained for ever in oblivion, had it not been for the incidental circumstance of a hunter stumbling over a piece of earthen ware sticking in the ground of its vicinity. The piece evincing the remains of an Indian salt-pan, the hunter examined the nearest spring, and found it to be of the quality I have just described. It has been since explored, and an ancient furnace, and many pieces of antique pottery, have been brought to light. The spring is not worked, the proprietor of the land being unknown, and the distance to the market considerable.

The discovery of earthen salt-pans strengthens the opinion I before entertained, that the Indians possessed the art of making potter's ware in a higher perfection than is attempted at the present day. They not only manufactured it to resist fire in ordinary culinary purposes, but to make it endure the violence of a furnace, a perpetual ebullition, and the corrosion of mineral salts.

The head waters of this river proceed from the immense chain of the Appilachean mountains, the fountains from the opposite side of which supply rivers that fall into the Mexican and Atlantic oceans. These head waters being guarded by a country nearly inaccessible and terrific to man, is now the uncontroverted domain of wolves, bears, &c. Bears especially inhabit the head of this river in such numbers, that their skins can be had by contract for one dollar each.

Great Sandy is also remarkable for being the boundary where Virginia subsides and Kentuckey commences. This commencement is exactly three hundred and thirty-four miles from Pittsburg, seven hundred and sixty-two from the Mississippi, and one hundred and ten from Lexington, the principal town of the Kentuckey state.

From the point of land below the mouth of Great Sandy, the view is very extensive. Looking across the Ohio, which is first seen to a considerable distance up and down, the rich and fertile state of Ohio reaches to the north, hundreds of miles. To the right Virginia runs to the Alleghany's base, where it is separated from the eastern American world. To the left lies the state of Kentuckey.

This point of land is eminently situated for a trading town. That denomination is already given to a few wretched huts, occupied occasionally by hunters, and a few stragglers undetermined as to their final establishment.

The authors who have given descriptions of Kentuckey, either never saw that state, or only would see a small portion of highly beautiful land which it contains in its centre, sixty miles long by about thirty miles broad. Of that singularly fertile, romantic, and delightful spot, enough, perhaps, has not been said; but of all the remainder of the state, whatever has been wrote or uttered in its favour, must have proceeded from a dangerous ignorance of facts, or a determination to delude and deceive both individuals and the public. I beg of you to judge from this simple survey.

From this place to Lexington, which is one hundred and ten miles, the road is marked on the ridges of mountains to within fifteen miles of that city. From the city again to Limestone, and to Cincinnati on the Ohio, a distance to each of seventy miles, the roads, with the exception of a few miles, are no more than Buffalo tracts. From the commencement of Kentuckey at Great Sandy, the body of eastern land is entirely mountainous for one hundred square miles. West it is a chain of mountains for an extent of

four hundred miles long by fifty broad, on average from the Ohio bank; and the south side is principally composed of "the Barrens," and the "Great Barren," terms which denote a country so sterile and inhospitable, that neither man nor beast can reside there for want of water. So mountainous is the river shore on the Kentuckey side, that in the distance of five hundred miles, there is not space for the erection of a town of any extent except on the very plain from which I now write, and, in consequence of there being no road along the left bank, travellers are compelled to proceed on the shore of the Ohio state.

After these facts, which no person can deny or controvert, we are left to deplore that the public should so long have been abused by the dreams of enthusiasts, and the falsehoods of knaves. Several thousands have sacrificed their wealth and prospects in repairing to this "Land of Promise," and to which their attention was led by flowery and enchanting fables. Several of these deluded persons, finding on their arrival in the state, that all the good land was occupied, or else bore a price entirely beyond their means, had to remain in small interval specks among the mountains, or to purchase portions of the Great Barrens for one shilling per acre, and catch water as they could from the dropping and distended clouds. Others who have come into the state and determined on settling on good lands and a somewhat comfortable neighbourhood, have been often obliged to sink their whole capital in the purchase of a small farm, the produce of which, from the mediocrity of its price at market, could never return the capital, or enable them to do any more than drag on a miserable existence. The price of the lands on the state, taking Lexington for a meridian, are as follows: town lots in Lexington, in the market street, and other popular situations, bear as high a price as any lot in the city of London. Land immediately round the town is four hundred dollars per acre; within one mile two hundred; within two or three miles one hundred; five or six miles from sixty to seventy. A few miles more distant the price falls from forty to fifty dollars per acre, and decreases progressively to from thirty to twenty, fifteen, ten, and five, at which price it breaks off at the mountains, where the land bears no price at all. There are circumstances also, which often contribute to set a local enhanced value on landed property. The most fertile part of Kentuckey, the very spot yet allowed to be an Eden, is very scarce of water. Land therefore, which possesses a mill-seat capable of act-

ing three months in a year, would fetch a very large sum of money. Salt-springs also, considerably raise the price of land surrounding them.

River-bottoms and good places for landing, from their scarcity, situation, and superior excellence, have also a higher price attached to them than any other parts not under the same circumstances.

Mr. Gardner, a sensible and civil man, who here keeps a tavern, having explored his neighbourhood in a considerable degree, I tempted him to take an excursion with me. We set off by dawn to observe the rising sun from a very high hill, about a mile to the south of the point. The eminence was gained in time to enjoy the finest spectacle in Nature.

On the particular spot where I was, I might have remained a long time before I could perceive the various effects of the sun on mountains, woods, valleys, and waters. The height was so great, that I calculated the rays of the sun could not strike the surface of the floods till they darted from the sun's rise of four hours.

Particular views of the river were various and beautiful from where I stood, though interrupted every mile by the sinuosities occasioned by its many windings. I found the time very favourable to form a judgment on the nature of the surrounding country. The sun shining only on the summits of hills, displayed their situation, course, and variety, while the dark intervals pointed out the few valleys and plains which lay commixed between them. The remarks I took accorded precisely with the observations I have made respecting the mountainous state of the country. Nor could I see any part of sufficient extent for a day's excursion, with any tolerable degree of possibility or ease, unless a strip of wood-land which formed the Ohio bank, and met with but little obstruction for several miles. I resolved to bend that way, and was about to depart, when Mr. Gardner informed me that on his first coming to the Kenhaway he discovered an Indian grave on the summit on which we stood. He pointed it out to me immediately on the direct summit, but I had the mortification to perceive that it had undergone so rude a violation, that I could distinguish nothing of its original form or character, or any remains, save two or three bones, which, judging by analogy, evinced a man far exceeding ordinary stature. Mr. Gardner could give me no satisfactory account, either in regard to the contents of the grave, or to the position and

appearances of the members of which it was composed: he did not even know the bearings of the head and feet; in short, I understood that the violation was committed by a Kentuckeyan, in quest of plunder, and that Mr. Gardner did not see the ruin till the deed was done. The instant I understood a Kentuckeyan was concerned, I gave up every inquiry, and contented myself with this other recent evidence, that there formerly existed Indian nations who buried their chiefs on the highest mountain tops, and distant from the living and the dead. Perhaps, too, such nations were worshippers of the sun, and by way of continuing to their princes the proud pre-eminence they allowed them in life, exposed their tombs to the first and last rays of their high and mighty luminary. This idea appears better grounded than on mere presumption: at present, however, I cannot back it by any testimony, and the fact is against me, that no Indian tribes east of the Mississippi, have ever in their worship or tradition, held out an evidence that their ancestors at any time worshipped the sun, or that they considered their tribes ever to have been the descendants of that all-powerful body. The subject must remain for elucidation, till the discovery of other data and events.

We proceeded down the hill, and along the strip of level woody bank I traced for our excursion from the summit. We met with excellent sport. Several flocks of wild turkeys crossed us from the mountains to the water-side; we killed two fine young birds, and could have killed forty had we been disposed to enter on the commission of unnecessary carnage. We also fell in with a great number of quails, remarkable for their size, and so fat and heavy, that they never attempted flight, but ran and hid themselves, among dry leaves and grass, to a very considerable distance from where we at first started them. Independent of what we killed, my dog ran down and caught several, two of which being perfectly white, were to me a great curiosity. The quails of this country are very tractable, soon domesticated, and easily kept to be killed for family use.

Our notice was frequently attracted by a number of hogs ranging in a wild state. They multiply to a great degree, notwithstanding that the wolves have no objection to their flesh, and that panthers consider them as their nicest diet. In this natural state they attain considerable courage and ferocity, to which, perhaps, their multiplication and safety may be attributed. The sows we met with were savage to such a degree, that they firmly stood between us and their

young, till the latter scampered off and concealed themselves with a skill which baffled the minutest search. When a litter is discovered and attacked by a panther, the old sow stands all the brunt, and maintains a fight of sufficient duration to allow the young to disperse, though often at the expence of her own life. Hogs attract so many wild beasts about a house, that Mr. Gardner has given over keeping any in a domestic way. When he lays up his winter provision, he selects hogs from the wood, and considers their flesh much more delicate than that of home-fed pork. Their food in the woods consists generally of acorns, nuts, berries, and roots, and occasionally on vermin, reptiles, and snakes, of which last they are extravagantly fond.

Coming to a fine creek which descended from the mountains, we halted, and made preparations to forward an excellent dinner, and repose during the violent heat of the day. We started again before six, and continued walking through a country interrupted with gullies, ridges, and creeks, till near ten, when we made fires, erected tents, and formed our establishment for the night. The place we had chosen was the site of an old Indian village, as was manifest from the number of mounds and other remains of ancient works extant around us. I turned to rest under my small shed and near a good fire, full of the vague ideas, and wide and wandering notions which the place, situation, and circumstances irresistibly inspired. I slept in the midst of mounds, which some thousands of years before were inhabited by men whose name and history were no longer on the face of the earth, and whose line and offspring I vainly sought for among existing nations. Overcome at length by toil, and weary of fruitless conjectures, I fell into the soundest sleep, and might have remained for hours in that oblivion, had I not been startled up by cries such as we are instructed to believe issue from spirits "confined fast in fire, to howl for ever in regions of eternal night." In an instant we were up and armed. The cry however approached, and increased to an alarming degree; the shrubs rustled, the leaves flew, and the pursuing and the pursued, passed us in apparent hundreds. The whole uproar, however, only was occasioned by a couple of wolves enjoying their nocturnal recreation in the chase of a herd of deer.

They hunt in the style of the best dogs, but give tongue with less melody. The Indians, who have the first-rate dogs, cross the breed with the wolf, and have this purpose effected by tying the female dog to a tree, in the haunt of

wolves, when she is in season. Roused up again by a din not likely to quit the ears in a short time, we pursued our way to the Kenhaway, and having met with no very particular event, I am again at liberty to conclude.

LETTER XX.

Settlement of the French Families removed from Galliopolis—Their mode of Life, and domesticated Animals—A French Rural Repast and Dance—Navigation to Alexandria—Account of the Town and its Vicinage—Portsmouth—The Sciota River—Chilicothé, principal Town of the Ohio State—Difficult Access to it—The Peckawee Plains—A grand Situation for a Capital—Antiquities of Chilicothé, and barbarous Taste of the Inhabitants—The Governor, his worthy Character—Slavery entirely abolished—Its beneficial Effects—Salt Springs—Run to Maysville.

Maysville, or Limestone K'y, July, 1807.

ON leaving the Great Kenhaway, I descended without interruption or stop twenty miles, when I made fast to the right hand shore, immediately opposite Little Sandy Creek. I brought to for the purpose of inquiring into the situation of the French families who abandoned Galliopolis in consequence of the imposition practised on them by the vender of the lands, and the ill health they enjoyed while on them. Opposite to the creek I have mentioned, and at the place I landed, is a tract of land of twenty thousand acres, extending eight miles on the river, granted by Congress to these unfortunate settlers, as some indemnification for the losses and injuries they had sustained; and four thousand acres adjoining, granted to M. Gervais, one of the principals, for the same purpose. On this latter tract, I understand, M. Gervais laid out a town named Burrsburgh, but it yet has to get an habitation and an inhabitant.

I found the settlers in something better health than at Galliopolis. They dwell altogether along the river bank; they pursue a very mean system of agriculture. Their best exertion only extends to a few acres of Indian corn and garden-stuff to meet their rigid necessities. They appear to

have no idea of farming, or to think, what I conceive perfectly just, that the price of produce is too contemptible to yield an equivalent for the labour and health necessarily wasted in bringing it to growth and maturity. The management of peach orchards suits their talents and habits, and these they bring to profit and perfection. There are here two peach distilleries at work, that vend about three thousand gallons of peach brandy, the amount of which furnishes the settlement with coffee, snuff, knives, tin ware, and other small articles in demand among French emigrants. I found the women constantly occupied in making an excellent strong cotton cloth, blue, for the men, and party-coloured for themselves and children. I took a walk down the entire settlement, and was much pleased with the simple and primitive manner of its residents. The day is passed in the coarser industry, the evening sitting in the house, or under the most adjacent shade, the women spinning, sewing and knitting, the men making and repairing their nets, gins, traps, and the children playing around, and instructing their pet animals. The blue jay arrived at the art of speaking better than any other bird I perceived among them; the paroquet also excelled in speaking; and the summer duck exceeded any thing I ever saw in point of plumage and colour. At one habitation were two beautiful tame deer, one as white as snow, and the other spotted like a leopard. They had each a collar and bell round the neck, went with the cows to pasture in the day-time, and returned at the sound of a conch shell to the protection of the house for the night. I considered them such singularly interesting creatures, that I made a proposition to purchase them, but was turned from the intention by the clamour and lamentations of the young people, who would by no means consent to part with their *Julie* and *Eveline*.

Racoons and opossums were common, and as tame as any animals could be. The opossums were not entertained on a mere principle of curiosity and pleasure: they were kept for utility. They bred with great regularity, and were esteemed better eating than a roasting pig—of whose flavour and qualities they strongly partake. I also took notice of a small aboriginal animal, called the Ground or Indian Hog—whose sensibilities are so little refined, that no attention or caresses, can ever force from it a reciprocity of manners; or make it refrain from snapping at the hand extended with its daily food. I was very much alarmed on approaching a house, at the door of which a large cub-bear

was hugging a child between his paws, and rolling and tumbling with it on the ground. The mother perceiving my apprehensions, exclaimed, "*O! Monsieur, ne craignez rien, ils sont bons amis.*"

It was sun set when I returned to my boat. I found a number of persons directly on the bank above it, assembled to converse with my man and Cuff. The manners of the French towards the Indians, form a complete contrast to those of the Americans. The French are sociable and friendly to them; the Americans rude, distant, and austere. In consequence, the Indians carry on a profitable intercourse with the one, while they studiously avoid, and manifest contempt for the other. The French never receive any injury or outrage from wandering tribes, while the Americans stand in perpetual anxiety, if the Indian hunters are known to be within fifty miles of them. The French comprehending from the manner I addressed them, that I was not displeased with their appearance about the boat, proposed with all imaginable *gaieté de cœur*, to sup on the ground, and have a little dance. I entered into their views with a vivacity which shewed them I took an interest in their pleasures, and I furnished my portion of the intended fête in biscuit, which was of the highest estimation, as the settlement had been for several months without *flour-bread*. The neighbouring houses soon provided their quota of milk, cheese, fruit, and various *viandes*, and three youths with a flute and two violins, were prepared to strike up after the rural repast. Never was supper more cheerful, never was society of so strange a *melange* seated on the banks of *La Belle Rivière*. Old Frenchmen, lively as youth, in large crimson caps; their wives still more animated, dressed in the obsolete times of Louis XIVth—the youth of both sexes habited *suivant l'usage du pays*, and mirthful, as if "fortune smiled upon their birth," formed the great outlines of the picture, while numbers of the domesticated animals I have mentioned followed their masters, and seemed "to crave their humble dole." Some without apprehension or restraint, came into the circle, while others maintained a cautious distance, and feared to commit themselves to the confidence of man.

Supper over, and the remains carried off, dancing commenced. Old and young at first joined with the utmost demonstrations of felicity and mirth; at length the aged and infirm sat down, while the youth danced cotillons for at least two hours. The dancing was highly graceful, and in as perfect tune and step as if the performers had been the

disciples of Vestris. Our festive scene was closed by a performance of Cuff's—he gave us in a grand style, a war, funeral, and marriage dance, which the French had the complaisance to applaud, though the words, "*quelle horreur! quelle abomination! sacre Dieu! le Sauvage!*" were tittered from every mouth. At twelve o'clock we separated, and with as many *adieus* and *souvenez vous de moi* as if our intimacy had been for years, and our future friendship to be eternal.

I left the settlement the following morning, much pleased with my visit, and the improved opinion it allowed me to entertain of a people whom I had to commiserate, from the accounts I heard of them at Galliopolis. I sincerely hope that the place may become healthy in time, and admit to their original views some small degree of realization and success.

Twelve miles below the French grant, I came before the Little Sciota, a small rivulet on the same side, from the mouth of which a bar of rocks extends half across the Ohio. The channel at the upper end of the bar is near the Kentuckey shore—at the lower end it is close round the rocks. About half a mile lower down I came to another bar, extending more than half across the river. Opposite the bar, on the Kentuckey shore, I found the water so shallow, that I was apprehensive of striking every moment. Working midway between the point of the bar and the Kentuckey shore, I recovered a good channel, and without sustaining any damage, though for some time my soundings were but from two feet to eighteen inches.

Running eight miles from the Little, I arrived before the Big Sciota, a fine river on the right hand shore, and dropped under Alexandria, a small town situated on the lower point, formed by the junction of the two rivers. Having secured the boat I went up to the town, intending to make from it some few excursions. I give you their result, without fatiguing you with their detail.

Alexandria contains about forty houses, and three hundred inhabitants, Dutch, Germans, Scotch, and Irish. While it was the seat of justice, and only place of deposit for the merchandize of the extensive settlements of the upper parts of the Sciota, it rose with great rapidity, and held out such demonstrations of success, that numbers settled in the town and neighbourhood, and bought town lots at such an extragavant price and rash avidity, that none remained on the hands of the original proprietors. The building of

a court-house augmented the spirit of speculation and settlement, and all went on to admiration, till the state legislature decreed that the courts, offices, &c. should be removed across the mouth of the Sciota, to a new town called Portsmouth, being a situation more eligible for that purpose, and as a depôt for merchandize and produce. In this manner did a stroke of the pen sign the ruin of Alexandria, and all the speculating forestallers of its adjacent lands and lots. A Dutchman who had purchased a number of excellent building grounds, proposed very seriously to "give me my choice for a strong pair of shoes." So sudden a fall is felt severely by the inhabitants in general; they sunk their means in giving the town a phlethoric rise, and are now without the capacity of removing. They declaim sadly against the decree of the state legislature, and say it was ordained to flatter general Massey, who is a member of the state, and proprietor of the township of Portsmouth. On passing over to Portsmouth, in my canoe, I heard a more honest and probable story. Alexandria is insulated every spring, and from lying below the mouth of the river, is not calculated for a place of depôt or business.

Portsmouth is in its first infancy. As the citizens of Alexandria must ultimately remove to it or perish, and as it commands numerous advantages both local and general, it is reasonable to conceive that it must become a place of consequence and resort.

The Sciota is two hundred and fifty yards wide at its mouth, which is in the latitude, 38° 22m and at the Salt-lick towns, two hundred miles above the mouth, it is yet one hundred yards wide. To these towns it is navigable for loaded bateaux, and an eastern branch which it possesses, affords navigation almost to its source in the confines of Canada, and the great northern lakes.

The lands immediately on the Sciota are exceedingly rich and fertile, but subject to inundation, and consequently capable of generating both fever and flux.

Chilicothé, the principal town of the Ohio state, and the seat of government, lies about sixty miles up the Sciota. Having heard so much of the town and government, I determined on passing a day or two there, and judging for myself. I suffered severely for my curiosity. My route lay through a wilderness so thick, deep, dark, and impenetrable, that the light, much less the air of heaven, was nearly denied access. We were, likewise, almost stung to madness by musquitoes. So numerous were these perse-

cutors, that we walked amidst them as in a cloud, and suffered to an excess not possible to describe. On encamping in the evening, I was in hopes the fire would drive them off, but was disappointed; they continued during the night to hover over their prey, and remained buzzing about our ears, preventing the possibility of repose.

Pursuing my route the next morning, I could discover the cause of such miriads of musketoes. The great body of the country, to a considerable distance west of the Sciota is a wood-swamp, a quality of land eminently favourable for the insect tribe, noxious reptiles, and inveterate disease. The evening of my second day's journey I arrived at Chilicothé, where I put up at an excellent inn, and soon lost the impression of all my sufferings.

Chilicothé is in appearance a flourishing little town, containing about one hundred and fifty houses, neat and well built, several of them occupied by the servants of the state, such as governor, attorney, solicitor, and surveyor generals, clerks of the treasury, judges of the supreme court, attorneys, &c. I observe it to be in appearance flourishing, because the principle of its rise is more fortuitous than permanent, and must in a year or two vanish entirely away. Like Alexandria, its fate is to be decided by a decree, or state act, which is shortly to fix on a more central situation for the deliberations of the legislature, and for the removal of the officers, and offices of government. When this takes place Chilicothé will be at once abandoned, and the traveller who follows me will hardly find an inhabitant in it to tell him when it rose, and how it fell; when it flourished, and by what means it so soon decayed. This premature and speedy ruin must come upon it, as well from its being abandoned by the bulk of its present wealthy inhabitants, as from the situation being sickly, and the adjacent country not being so rich as to invite emigrants to settle upon it in any numbers. Why the state government do not name the Pickawee Plains for the seat of their capital, and the seat of their deliberations, is a matter of surprise. I rode to these plains in about four hours from Chilicothé, and do not conceive that the world entire could furnish so grand, so great, or so sublime a position for a capital or great flourishing town. Though a plain, it inclines gradually from its centre to its side, and commands a view over wood-lands, and meadows of great magnificence and extent. It lies but three miles from the river, and has in its vicinity excellent water, and a number of salt-licks. Returning from this ride through some

small meadows of great beauty overrun with flowers, I passed through a place called the Old Indian town, the remains of which were too imperfect to merit investigation, and on entering Chilicothé I found an ancient mound was suffered to remain in the centre of the town, both as a monument of former times, and of the taste of the present inhabitants. I was encouraging opinions highly flattering to the citizens, who appeared to honour antiquity so much, as to build round the base of one of its most interesting subjects, till, on taking the circumference of the mounds, I discovered that they had begun to fell the timber from the sides and summit, and to carry off the mould to fill up holes in the streets, or to throw upon their gardens and cultivated ground. The respect I had commenced to entertain for the inhabitants fled before this testimony of the depravity of their taste, and vulgarity of their minds. Never did art or nature before accord to a town so beautiful, so antique, or so interesting an ornament. An ornament connected with the history of the remotest times, with men and events no longer known to posterity, and with feelings and circumstances which ought to have endeared it to the heart, and made it an object fit for the most sacred contemplation of the mind.

Previously to my ride to the Pickawee's, I waited on the governor, (Mr. Tiffin) with a lettter recommending me to his attention. I was handed a card which desired my company to dinner on the day of my return. I readily complied, and met at his house nearly all the officers of the state. They were mostly from eastern America, and of better manners and education than I had for some time met. The governor, very fortunately for the state, is nothing more than a plain, well-informed, honest man. Some out of derision, and others out of respect, call him a religious character. The latter class have all the honour and justice of the appellation, as no state in the union progresses more in prosperity, or is so distinguished for morals, integrity, and public worth. The simple and sophisticated principles of the governor pervade the whole state.

The first act of the Ohio legislature, advised by this honest man, was to abate the spirit of the master, and to allow that of the slave to rise from the dust: not to mollify his condition, as in other countries by gradual proceedings, but at once to declare him free and independent as themselves, equally entitled to the auspices of heaven, and to the protection of the laws and immunities of their emanci-

pated state. The act immediately destroyed the whole commerce and distinction between master and slave, which was a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. To this benign and humane proceeding may be attributed the rapid prosperity of the state. Many of those who had ardently wished for the regeneration of the negro race, came and settled in the province which declared them free; others followed men whose example and probity they admired, and the country possesses an industrious population, improved by the moral exercises of the body and the mind. Whereas in the Virginian, Kentuckeyan, Tenessee, and Carolean states, the whole labour of the citizens is to storm, to give a loose to the worst of passions, and get their work performed by exercising a tyranny over others, which they stamp with a variety of horrid and painful peculiarities. I also learned while at table, where the conversation led on points on which I expressed a desire of information, that the governor has directed the attention of the legislature to the improvement of the penal code; to the more equal distribution of punishment, and the simplification of the law, by casting out all extraneous expressions, and matter, and by rejecting every obsolete and technical word. The governor's notion is, that the people ought to understand the language of an act as well as the lawyers who benefit by its misconceptions and abuse, and that a law, in order to be useful, should be simple, and uttered in words intelligent to the vulgar and unlettered mind. I conceive that this conduct will be followed by a very salutary effect. It certainly promises to be productive of understanding, and to the discovery of truth without the interventions of learning or the interference of many heads. The world wanted to see a trial of this enlightened kind; a few years will decide its success, and I sincerely desire it may be in the proportion which the intentions of the governor so decidedly merit.

I understood from the gentlemen of our party who had explored the whole state, that the best land lay to the west of Chilicothé; that it was fitted to an incredible degree for all the purposes of agriculture, and grazing stock of every kind, except sheep, which could not be kept from panthers and wolves that were every where in great numbers. To annihilate this last grievance a premium or recompense is offered by the government for every panther's skin.

I left the governor instructed and pleased with the time I

passed under his plain yet hospitable roof, and prepared a canoe to descend the Sciota the succeeding morning. With much exertion, I got down by the noon of the second day.

The principal salt-springs towards the head waters of the Sciota are the property of the United States. They yield a profit of twenty-five per cent. on capital laid out, and all other incidental expences. The remains of a few Indian nations inhabit the head of the river adjoining the lakes, and the banks from the lakes to the Ohio abound with Indian monuments to such a degree, that it is evident they were formerly the favourite resort and residence of numerous tribes.

I left the Sciota with very little regret: the heat, the insects of the vermin annoyed me so much, that I was glad to push into the middle of the great current, and pursue my way to the town, at which I arrived in two easy days' run from the Sciota, a distance of sixty-two miles, in which I passed three islands, and several creeks of no account, except Salt Lick Creek, just above the mouth of which is a town called Vanee Ville, where considerable salt works are carried on, and salt made of a good quality. This creek is on the Kentuckey shore. I should also have remarked, that ten miles above Maysville the town of Manchester stands on the right hand shore. It is not thriving, though it is pleasantly situated, and commands a delightful and extensive view down the Ohio. Immediately above it is a chain of islands, three in number, well timbered, but lying too low to be occupied by the farmer.

LETTER XXI.

Maysville, or Limestone Town—Liberty Town—Interior of Kentuckey—Deceitful Prospect—Washington—Mayslick, a Salt-spring—Salt Licks, why so called—The Blue Lick—Millersburgh—Paris.

Maysville, or Limestone Key, July, 1806.

THIS is the oldest, and most accustomed landing place in the whole state of Kentuckey, and the termination of the main road from Lexington, and other interior towns. The distance from Lexington is sixty-three miles, and from

Pittsburg four hundred and twenty-five. The creek just above called Limestone creek, is inconsiderable of itself, but affords in high water a small harbour for boats. The landing is a good one, lying in the bend of the river. The town contains about seventy houses, and supplies accommodation for the storage of goods deposited here before they are received into waggons, which take them to Lexington, whence they are distributed through the entire state. It would appear from the commanding situation of the town, from its being a place of deposit, and from the excellence of its landing, that it ought to rise into eminence, and become a place of mercantile importance, and it possibly would, if nature and circumstances had not otherwise determined. It is seated on the segment of a circle, circumscribed to a few acres, cut and intersected by ravines, and bounded by the river in front, and by stupendous mountains in the rear. The town has taken but fifteen years to arrive at the extent of its limits, and the acmé of its vigour; and ten more will close the history of its decline and fall. The cause of a declension so rapid is owing to a town being laid off by the state legislature, about a mile above Maysville, in a spacious and pleasant bottom of the Ohio, which possesses the advantages of extent, water, and excellent roads into the interior of the country. This new town, called Liberty, is progressing fast. Some of the most active and speculative inhabitants have removed to it from Maysville, and a ship yard under the direction of Messieurs Gallaghus is established, which has already turned off the stocks, and launched fit for sea, five vessels, the last of which was a fine ship of three hundred and fifty tons!

From Limestone, and of course from Liberty, to the mouth of the Ohio, and down the Mississippi, loaded boats can go at all seasons, unless in time of ice, without any difficulty, except at the falls, and one or two other places. At this period, however, and at all times when the water is entirely low, the navigation is excessively tedious.

I have just returned from a tour of ten days into the interior of Kentuckey. I give you the substance of it in as few words as possible.

My landlord at Maysville accommodated me with a tolerable good horse, but the hill was so steep at the back of the town, that I had to lead him up it, for fear of blowing him in the early part of his journey. Arriving on the summit, I was struck with a prospect which has deceived and deluded many a one before me. It was a plain, thickly settled

with excellent well built farm-houses, and raising wheat and corn of a strength and luxuriance perhaps unknown to any other country than the opposite Ohio state. This prospect makes a most infatuated impression on those poor emigrants destined for Kentuckey, and who for seven hundred miles before had their view intercepted by mountains, and chains of mountains, extending through the country, or elevating their heads to the skies. Struck with the beauty and richness of the valley at length seen, they would think the land of promise at last obtained; bless their fate, and pursue their journey to meet with other chains of mountains, and other endless succession of hills. The mountain descended, I lost sight of the valley, and gained the summit of a ridge which conducted me to Washington, a town four times as large as Maysville, and but four miles distance from that place.

It appears that Washington was built, and rose into magnitude at a period when the Kentuckeyans, terrified at the warlike spirit and just depredations of the Indians, were afraid to dwell upon the river shores, where canoes could silently arrive in the night, and call upon them for a sudden retribution, or inflict upon them a severe revenge! Since that period it has retained its importance, and probably improved, owing to the necessary contraction of Maysville, and the antipathy of the former to the mountain lying between the cultivated grounds and that town.

Mayslick is a salt-spring formerly worked, since abandoned in consequence of the discovery of less feeble waters. It is yet interesting, from having been the resort of millions of animals who came there to purify their blood at annual intervals, and return to the great barrens, swamps, wildernesses, and cane-breaks, in search of favorite pasture though pregnant with putridity and disease. I amused myself more than an hour in discovering vestiges of facts which occurred in the most remote antiquity. No vegetable whatever grows near the Lick. The soil fit for vegetation being trampled down below the surface, and a blue clay trampled up, is perhaps the cause of this phenomenon. At all events it cannot be attributed to the salt and sulphur of the ground, as other grounds are known saturated with those qualities, to produce vegetation in a rich abundance. In the vicinity of the spring are several holes, marked in such a manner as to proclaim at once that they were formed by animals wallowing in them after they had bathed and satiated. Some banks in the neighbourhood are hollowed out in a semilunar manner from

the action of beasts rubbing against them, and carrying off quantities of the earth on their hides, wet, with the view of tempering the mould, and forming a coat of mail to resist the stings of wasps, and all the armed insect tribe. One of those scooped out hollow banks appeared like the side of a hill from which one hundred thousand loads of soil might have been carried off, and the height of the waste of the bank by friction was so great, that I could not reach it within ten feet, though aided by a pole seven feet long. I admit that some of the upper part might have washed down, and given the place a space not required by attrition, but the impression made on the mind from general appearances of the concavity, which cannot be described, was favourable to an idea that the concave sweep was made in the bent by animals of uncommon height and magnitude; probably by the mammoth, whose bones have been often found not far distant from the spot. Other substances within the area of the salt ground evince their having been licked, and worn by the action of the tongue. It was these indications which induced the first settlers to give the name of salt-licks to saline springs. They abound at Mayslick, and are expressed on stones with more precision than on the banks or surface of the impregnated earth, the impressions of which diminish with the increase of time. The indention on one stone I found to be four inches deep, that is in its greatest concavity, and seven inches wide. On the same rock were several lesser indentions, and on other rocks, after more minute research, I discovered several more concavities both larger and smaller, than what I have described. The stone appeared to me to be a blue limestone, either impregnated with salt, or receiving it on its surface, from the vapours issuing from the spring, and falling to the earth from incapacity to rise in consequence of its density and weight. To me the taste of sulphur appeared to predominate in the spring more than that of salt; and as the salt water rose and blended with the fresh, it diffused itself in black clouds through the surface, and discoloured it as far as the salt undulation could extend.

Having made these few remarks, I mounted my horse, and continued the road to Lexington, till I arrived at a place called the Blue lick, both from the colour of the stone and the clay brought to the surface by the constant trampling of thousands of animals which formerly frequented the springs. Here also vegetation entirely ceases. The blue springs are now in operation; the water has not much strength; nine hundred gallons are required to make a

bushel of salt, the price of which at the furnace is two dollars and a half. The indications of rolling in the mire, attrition of banks, and indentions in rocks, from licking their surface, are more numerous at the Blue than at Mayslick; and an old settler informed me, that on searching for the best fountains of salt, bones were found which required from four to six men to remove. One entire *defence*, or mammoth's horn, was raised up, and lay on the bank till knocked to pieces by persons coming along, and who wished to *find out what it was*.

I pursued my journey for the remainder of the day without any particular occurrence to divert my attention, till I arrived late in the evening at a little town called Millersburgh, where I proposed passing the night. Millersburgh is thirty-seven miles from Limestone, and the road, without any essential exception, is a mere buffalo track, following skilfully the ridges of hills and mountains, to avoid deep ravines and swamps, which occasionally occupy the few interstices and intervals which lie between them. Nothing like a plain did I see the whole day, save what I noticed in the morning, or any other prospect whatever, than one mighty scene of endless mountains covered with ponderous and gloomy wood. I did not even meet with so much interval land as could suffice a single farm, and had I not refreshed at the licks, I might have fasted till my arrival at the town. And yet that part of the country is described by Imlay and others, as a lawn producing shrubs and flowers, and fit for the abode of gods instead of man. Had such writers been aware that their romance might occasion miseries in real life, I am willing to think that they would have controuled the fancy which produced it, and have given the world plain and useful truths, which would have served the unfortunate emigrant as a faithful and honest guide, in the place of offering him flattering and fallacious images, the pursuit of which winds up his history of calamity, disappointment and destruction; and he discovers the nature of romance at the price of his happiness and fortune.

After passing the night very uncomfortably at Millersburgh, a complete *Kentuckey inn*, I next morning set out and rode to Paris, which was but eight miles from Millersburgh, to breakfast, and had to notice a vast amelioration in the land, and a sensible disposition in the mountains to subside into plains and valleys of greater range and extent than any I had hitherto seen in the state. The ground about Paris, notwithstanding, was broken with several hills, and the town itself stood on the

high bank of a considerable creek, which gave the face of the country a still more interrupted appearance. On the whole, the situation was beautiful, and highly advantageous, as the creek supplied falls for two mills, and water of a good quality, for domestic and other purposes. Paris contains about one hundred and fifty houses, and, being the county town of Bourbon, has a court-house and other offices of justice. When I rode up to the inn, a *negro girl* took my horse to the stable, and said she was hostler!

I arrived at Paris at so early an hour that few of the family were stirring, and no breakfast appeared likely to be had for some time. This reminded me of a very disagreeable custom prevailing all through America. No individual traveller can get breakfast, dinner, or supper, at times of his own choosing. He must wait for the family hours, and till all the strangers assemble and sit down together. Those who arrive after this species of public breakfast, have to wait for dinner, and such as miss the dinner hour must fast till night. They have other customs calculated also to annoy; for instance, on entering the Paris inn, I expressed a wish to have breakfast as soon as possible, as I had to reach Lexington to dinner. And to expedite the breakfast, I begged to have nothing prepared but tea or coffee. These instructions availed me nothing. Children were dispatched after fowls, which took to the gardens and fields, in vain to prolong their minutes, which were numbered; they were caught, plucked, and put on the fire, part of which was previously occupied baking bread, frying ham, &c. &c. After the expiration of two hours, a table was set out with knives, forks, pickles, &c. &c. covered with several dishes of cold and hot meat, while the tea was held at a distance, to be handed at intervals *for drink*. I made my breakfast on tea and heavy hot bricks, and could not resist telling the landlady that she would have spared herself much trouble, and given me much time, had she made but a cup of tea in the first instance. She observed, that might be, but that she was always *used* to do as she had done, and altered her ways for nobody. I asked her what was to pay, and cast a dollar upon the table, enraged at the low state of some minds, their attachment to wrong, and determination to persist in evil and dull habits, which they know to be adverse to their prosperity and improvement. She took up the dollar, and pitching it to a negro, desired him to *chop it*. "Chop it! ma'am I want it changed." She made no reply, but going to the man, desired him to *chop* out of the dollar one quarter and one

eighth; in other words, to cut out her charge of one shilling and threepence for my breakfast, and ninepence for my horse. The man did this with great dexterity, and returned me the dollar with nearly one fourth cut out, with an angle running to the middle, which gave it the appearance of three fourths of a circle. Learning that this was the legal mode of procuring change, I got the same dexterous person to transform a couple more dollars with his chisel, into quarters, eighths, and sixteenths. He executed that service in a few moments; I received a handful of small change, which I found of advantage on the road.

Supplied with change and fresh information, I left Paris, and arrived at Lexington, through a country for the most part fertile, and cultivated in the proportion of one enclosed acre to one thousand waste. A very great proportion in favour of agriculture above any part I have seen since my descent of the river, or since my arrival on the west side of the Alleghany mountains. Farewell, I shall resume this route in my next.

LETTER XXII.

Lexington described—Churches—University—Amusements—Concerts and Balls—The Inhabitants, Male and Female—Trade—The Merchants, their great Wealth—The Market—Expence of Boarding—The Town likely to decrease—Climate—Fevers—Their Causes—Soil—Farms, Produce, &c.—A Catacomb, with Mummies—Manner of embalming.

Maysville, Limestone, July, 1806.

LEXINGTON stands in that portion of the state of Kentuckey which has been so celebrated for its excessive fertility, pre-eminent beauty, and abundant advantages. It is the most flourishing, and with but one exception, the largest inland town in the United States. The site is a valley running between the rise of grounds, which undulate like the sea, and subside into plains whose inclination is merely sufficient to cast off the waters without confining the circulation of air, or circumscribing the prospect around. No situation could be more favourable, except for the absence of water.

The town is composed of upwards of three hundred houses, ranged into streets, intersecting each other at right angles, they are principally built of brick, in a handsome modern manner, and many of them are furnished with some pretensions to European elegance. The public buildings consist of a university, court-house, market, hall, bank, and four churches, if they can be so called, one Lutheran, one presbyterian, and two sects of methodists. The inhabitants shew demonstrations of civilization; but at particular times on Sundays and market days they give a loose to their dispositions, and exhibit many traits that should exclusively belong to untutored savages. Their churches have never been finished, and they have all the glass struck out by boys in the day, and the inside torn up by rogues and prostitutes who frequent them at night.

The university is a good brick building, supported by public bounty, eleemosinary collections, and private munificence. Some gentlemen in London have furnished it with books and mathematical instruments. It has a principal, two Latin and Greek, and one English and mathematical professor. These gentlemen are appointed by the governors of the university, who are the head officers of state and citizens of the town of Lexington. The university is not calculated to lodge the scholars who frequent it; they amount to one hundred, and are boarded in the town for sixteen pounds each per annum, washing and lodging inclusive. The course of study and the plan of the university is after the manner of a good English grammar school, and turns out young men who are far from being contemptible scholars.

The prevailing individual amusements of Lexington are drinking, and gambling at billiards and cards. Every idle hour is spent at taverns and billiard rooms. The public amusements consist of concerts and balls, which are well attended, and by a company not expected to be seen on a transmontane state. The ladies express in their opinions and manners a vast superiority over the men. They are in general better educated, and by leading a temperate life of serene repose, they preserve a tranquil and healthy appearance, which the men forfeit at an early period, by a propensity to drinking, and by abandoning themselves at all times to turbulent and unruly passions. The women are fair and florid—many of them might be considered as rude beauties, but none of them have any pretensions to that chaste and elegant form of person and countenance which

distinguish our countrywomen and other ladies of Europe. The absence of that irresistible grace and expression may be attributed to their distance from improved society, and to the savage taste and vulgarity of the men.

A small party of rich citizens are endeavouring to withdraw themselves from the multitude, or to draw a line of distinction between themselves as *gens comme il faut* and the *canaille*. The public at large consider this a dangerous innovation; they wish men to continue all vagrants alike, and fear that the light of a few characters distinguished by a superiority of virtue and integrity, will exhibit general deformity in stronger colours, and render public vice more great and flagitious than what their conduct could wish it to appear. The present better sort of persons consist of six or eight families, who live in a handsome manner, keep livery servants, and admit no persons to their tables of vulgar manners or suspicious character. As wealth increases in Kentuckey, *the line of distinction* will extend through Lexington to the minor commercial towns, and may possibly pervade the country after a lapse of some centuries.

The principal business of the town and state is conducted by the heads of the houses emancipated from the vulgar bondage of the people. That business consists of ordering immense quantities of goods from Philadelphia and Baltimore, and in bartering the same through the state for produce, which they forward to Frankfort and Lanesville by land, and from thence to New Orleans by water. The goods are all British of every kind, and the produce taken in exchange consists of flour, corn, hemp, flax, cotton, tobacco, ginseng, &c. and of live hogs, pork, hams and bacon. The merchants of Lexington not only supply their own sate, but t hat of Tenessee, which lies to the southward of them, and part of the Indian territory, which lies to the north, in consequence they are becoming extremely wealthy, possessing from fifteen to forty thousand dollars a year, and are instrumental to the dissemination of wealth in the town, and all the collateral state settlements.

The market is abundantly supplied with every article of provision found in the first markets of Europe, except fish. I cannot give you a better idea of its cheapness, than by stating certain demands of publicans and others. The highest taverns charge half a dollar a day for lodging and three repasts, each of which consists of a profusion of meat and game, with vegetables of various sorts. The morning and evening meal has in addition, coffee and tea, which are

handed when called for, being considered as no more than auxiliaries to the feast. Inferior taverns find every accommodation for two dollars a week, and boarding houses furnish the same from fifty to one hundred dollars per year.

Under these considerations it might be conceived, that Lexington must become a place of magnitude and importance. There are, however, circumstances which refuse encouragement to such an idea. The state of Kentuckey is not likely to increase in population. I may even be nearer to truth in the assertion, that its numbers will decrease, and rapidly decline. There was a time when its reputation was so great, that the stream of emigration set into it from the east, and deposited here the riches and the people of numerous provinces. This people and others brought into the west by the same flood, in the process of a few years explored other regions, and opened avenues to other countries and climes more generally fertile and capable of supplying the comforts and necessaries of life. Many have gone north to the Ohio, some north and west to the Indian territory, and thousands have passed to the south, to people the Tenessee, and the remote forests of Louisiana. This spirit of emigration still prevailing, it is evident that the town and state are no longer susceptible of rising into eminence, and that their decline and degeneracy in wealth are reasonably to be apprehended.

In regard to the climate, the winter is mild; snow and frost seldom continue above three or four weeks; the spring is dry, interrupted only by the necessary refreshment of occasional showers; the summer is not violently hot, being tempered by a perpetual breeze; and the autumn is distinguished by the name of the second summer. Controuled by these facts, the public cry is, that Kentuckey *must* be healthy, that, enjoying such a climate, it cannot be otherwise, and that no country of the globe can boast such salubrity and such an atmosphere. It is my misfortune to have to dispute and to deny these facts—which I too wished to cherish, but which vanish before investigation and enquiry. A spring, summer, and fall fever regularly visits the town of Lexington, and every settlement of the state; and at the moment I was in Lexington a malignant disease raged with such violence at the town of Frankfort, but twenty-four miles distant, that all intercourse and communication between that town and country were suspended and cut off. Louisville, another town on the Ohio, has lost all its original settlers in the period of ten years; and every other town

and portion of the state are affected with periodical complaints.

On reflection and conviction of the charms of the seasons, I am forced into the opinion that the climate itself is healthy, but subject to corruption from local circumstances and mephitic vapour, introduced into the atmosphere from the southern and western swamps and stagnated waters. There is nothing more common in Kentuckey in the fine seasons, than to meet with bodies of warm air, which though they pass rapidly by, very forcibly strike the senses. Their heat is considerably beyond that of the human body. They have been calculated to be about twenty or thirty feet diameter horizontally. Of their height there is no experience, but probably they are globular volumes rolled along with the wind, and generated in the cypress swamps of the corrupt provinces of Louisiana. They are most frequent at sun-set, rare in the middle parts of the day, and hardly ever met with in the morning. That they are noxious there can be but little doubt, from their oppressive heat, and the languor they cause in those whom they strike, and on whose habitations they sometimes tarry. Their motion is very sluggish, except when accelerated by winds, at which times they move with so much velocity as not to afford time to the most sensible thermometer to seize their temperature. To these two causes, local corruptions and disease imported in large volumes of contagious air, I am inclined to attribute the unhealthiness of the country.

Lexington was formerly the capital of the state. That title has been transferred to Frankfort, in consequence, I presume, of that town standing on the head of the navigation of a river of the same name. From the dreadful periodical sickness of that town the legislature is again expected to return to Lexington, where a large court-house is now building, and some other public works going on. If this event does take place, it will add considerably to the consequence of the town, by augmenting its population, and increasing its opulence.

The soil round Lexington is from one to thirty feet deep —the bottom throughout the whole state a solid bed of limestone. The beds of creeks and streams are solid limestone; and the Kentuckey river runs through a natural canal, whose perpendicular sides of one hundred feet high, are composed of limestone rock. The farms in the vicinity of Lexington are very neat, and many of them affect the English manner. The produce is great, the price low.

Flour three dollars per barrel—Corn one shilling per bushel. The distribution of water is very unequal through the state. The greatest part of the farms have none but what they procure from wells cut through the limestone rock, several feet thick, and through strata of clay and gravel of infinite hard labor. The wells in general descend sixty feet. Gardens produce with great and excellent abundance. Melons, cucumbers, &c. grow in the open air, without manure or attention. Grapes cluster in the woods, and peaches and pomegranates flourish in the corn fields.

Lexington stands nearly on the site of an old Indian town, which must have been of great extent and magnificence, as is amply evinced by the wide range of its circumvallatory works, and the quantity of ground it once occupied. Time, and the more destructive ravages of man, have nearly levelled these remains of former greatness with the dust, and would possibly allow them to sink into an entire oblivion, were they not connected with a catacomb, formed in the bowels of the limestone rock, about fifteen feet below the surface of the earth, and lying adjacent to the town of Lexington! This grand object, so novel and extraordinary in America, was discovered about twenty years ago by some of the first settlers, whose curiosity was excited by something remarkable in the character of stones which struck their attention while hunting in the woods. They removed these stones, and came to others of singular workmanship; the removal of which laid open the mouth of a cave—deep, gloomy, and terrific. With augmented numbers, and provided with cordage and light, they descended, and entered without obstruction a spacious apartment; the sides and extreme ends were formed into niches and compartments, and occupied by figures representing men! When alarm subsided, and the sentiment of dismay and surprise permitted further research and enquiry, the figures were found to be Indian mummies, preserved by the art of embalming to great preservation and perfection of state!

Unfortunately for antiquity, science, and every thing else held sacred by the illumined and learned, this inestimable discovery was made at a period when a bloody and inveterate warfare was carried on between the Indians and the whites, and the power of the former was displayed in so formidable a manner, that the latter were filled with terror and a spirit of revenge, which manifested itself both on contemptible and important occasions. Animated by this worthless and detestable spirit, the discoverers of the catacomb delighted

to wreak their vengeance even on the Indian dead. They dragged the mummies to the day, tore the bandages open, kicked the bodies into dust, and made a general bonfire of the most ancient remains antiquity could boast: of remains respected by many hundred revolving years, held sacred by time, and unsusceptible of corruption, if not visited by profane and violating hands!

What these despoilers did not accomplish, their followers in the course of time took care to effect. I have explored the catacomb, and can bear testimony to the industry and determination of the *curious* who resort to it to efface every mark of workmanship, and to destroy every evidence of its intention or original design!—The angles and ornaments of the niches are mutilated; all projections and protuberances are struck off; every mummy removed, and so many fires have been made in the place, either to warm the visitors or to burn up the remains, that the shades, dispositions, and aspects, have been tortured into essential difference and change.

The descent is gradually inclined, without a rapid or flight of stairs.—The width four feet, the height seven.—The passage but six feet long, is a proportion larger, and the catacomb extends one hundred paces by thirty-five. It is about eighteen feet high; the roof represents an irregular vault, and the floor an oblong square nearly level. From the niches and shelvings on the sides, it might be conjectured that the catacomb could contain, in appropriate situations, about two thousand mummies. I could never learn the exact quantity it did contain, the answer to my enquiries being "Oh! they burned up and destroyed hundreds." Nor could I arrive at any knowledge of the fashion, manner, and apparel of the mummies in general, or receive any other information than that "they were well *lapped up*, appeared sound and *red*, and consumed in the fire with a rapidity that baffled all observation and description."

Not content with such general and traditionary remarks, I employed several hands, and brought to light forty or fifty baskets of rubbish gleaned throughout the vault, both from the sides and from the floor. The dust of the heap was so light, impalpable and pungent, that it rose into the atmosphere and affected the senses so much as to cause effusion of the eyes and sneezing, to a troublesome degree. I still proceeded on a minute investigation, and separated from the general mass, several pieces of human limbs, fragments of bodies, solid, sound, and apparently capable of eternal du-

ration! with much violence they broke into parts, but emitted no dust, or shewed any inclinations to putrization. The impalpable powder arose from the bands and ligatures with which they were bound, the pungency of which denoted their composition to be vegetable matter.

In a cold state the subjects had no smell whatever, but when submitted to the action of fire they consumed with great violence, emitted no smoke, and diffused an agreeable effluvia which scented the air, but with no particular fragrance to which it could be assimilated.

How these bodies were embalmed, how long preserved; by what nation, and from what people descended, no ideas can be formed, nor any calculation made, but what must result from speculative fancy and wild conjectures. For my part, I am lost in the deepest ignorance. My readings afford me no knowledge, my travels no light. I have neither read, heard, nor known of any of the North American Indians who formed catacombs for their dead, or who were acquainted with the art of preservation by embalming. The Egyptians, according to Herodotus, had three methods of embalming; but Diodorus observes, that the ancient Egyptians had a fourth method, of far greater superiority. That manner is not mentioned by Diodorus, it has been extinct three thousand years, and yet I cannot think it presumptuous to conceive that the Indians were acquainted with it, or with a mode of equal virtue and effect.

The Kentuckeyans assert in the very words of the Greek, that the features of the face and the form and appearance of the whole body were so well preserved, that they must have been the exact representations of the living subjects. The Indians could not have the art of embalming in the methods made known by Herodotus, because they never could have had the necessary materials—as evidence, let us review the three systems, to which, in Egypt, different prices were attached. In the most esteemed method, they extracted the brains by the nose with a crooked iron, and then poured in drugs, afterwards they opened the body, took out the bowels, washed the inside with palm wine, and having rubbed into it pounded perfumes, filled the cavity with myrrh, cassia, and other spices, and then sewed it up. After this they washed the body with nitre, then let it lie seventy days; and having washed it again, bound it up in folds of linen, besmearing it over with gums which they used instead of glue. The relations then took home the body, and enclosing it in the wooden figure of a man, placed it in the catacombs. Another method of embalming was injecting

turpentine of cedar with a pipe into the body, without cutting it; they then salted it for seventy days, and afterwards drew out the pipe, which brought along with it the intestines. The nitre dried up the flesh, leaving nothing but skin and bones. The third way was only cleansing the inside with salt and water, and salting it for seventy days.

The first of these methods could not have been employed by the Indians, for want of palm wine, myrrh, cassia, and other perfumes. The second could not be that practised by them, as it tended to waste the flesh and preserve the mere skin and bones—and the third is inadmissible, from its incapacity to resist the unremitting destruction and ravages of time.

An argument may be adduced to favor an opinion of the remote antiquity of the Indian mummies, from the entire and complete consumption of their bandages, wrappers, and bands—which on the Egyptian mummies continue to this day in higher preservation than the body they envelop. There is a mummy in an English collection of curiosities, brought from Egypt by the French, and taken from them by one of our privateers, which is remarkable for containing only the head and part of the thigh and leg bones wrapped in folds of fine linen to the consistence of three inches thick. The linen in some parts was as white and perfect as new, and on the legs there was some appearance of the flesh still remaining, although, from a moderate calculation, it must have been embalmed upwards of two thousand years. It may then again be repeated, that the Indian mummies are of higher antiquity than the Egyptian, as the bandages are consumed on the one though not on the other, except, as I had occasion to remark, that the Indian ligatures were of a substance more susceptible of decay than the Egyptian. But this is a subject of too great magnitude, variety, and diffusion, for my purpose. I submit the fact for the consideration of a better judgment, and an abler pen, and conclude by informing you, that I restored every article to the catacomb—save some specimens retained as objects of the first curiosity, and blocking up the entry with the huge stones which originally closed it up, left the spot with the strongest emotions of veneration and displeasure; veneration for so sublime a monument of antiquity, and displeasure against the men whose barbarous and brutal hands reduced it to such a state of waste and desolation.

No other catacomb is known in the state, though barrows abound in various directions.

LETTER XXIII.

Excellent Navigation between Limestone and Cincinnati—Augusta—The Little Miami of the Ohio—Columbia—Licking River—Cincinnati—Details of this important Town—Interesting Anecdote of a Lady.

Cincinnati, State of Ohio, July, 1806.

THE navigation is so very good between Limestone and this town, a distance of sixty-eight miles, that I descended in two short days run, without meeting any obstruction, there being but one island close to the Kentuckey shore in the whole course, and I understand that there is no other to be met with for seventy-two miles further down, which leaves a range of one hundred and fifty miles of free navigation—a scope without example in any other of the western waters.

Leaving Limestone seven miles, the first object I came to was Eagle Creek, on the right hand shore. A little above it on the Kentuckey side is a small town called Charlestown, opposite to which place, in the middle of the river, is a very large sand bar, the channel part being on the left hand shore. Four miles from Eagle is Bracken Creek, on the Kentuckey shore. It gives name to the county through which it runs. The county town is fixed at the mouth of an extensive bottom, and in a very handsome situation. It is yet small, not being long laid out.—Augusta is the name given to it. I am disposed to think very favourably of the taste of the inhabitants, from the judicious manner they have cleared the timber of their settlement. They have left on a very fine bank of gradual descent to the water, six rows of stately trees, which form several grand avenues, and afford shade from the sun, without obstructing the breeze or circulation of air. They have also left clumps of trees and small groves in the improvements, which have a pleasing effect, and strike the attention more forcibly, as Augusta is the only town on the river which has respected the ornaments of nature, or left a single shrub planted by her chaste yet prodigal hand. In all other settlements the predominant rage is to destroy the woods, and what the axe cannot overturn is left to the vigour of fire. This element is applied to a work which mocks the labour of man, and in a short time con-

verts the greatest forests and the richest scenes to a dreary prospect of dissolution and waste.

Between Augusta and the Little Miami of the Ohio, a distance of forty-two miles, I met with no circumstance worth relating. The Little Miami of the Ohio is sixty or seventy yards wide at its mouth, is sixty miles to its source, and affords no navigation. The lands on its banks are reckoned among the richest on the continent of America: they lie low, are considerably settled, and sell for from three to twenty dollars per acre. The river abounds in fish, runs over a rocky channel, and is as clear as fountain water. Just below the junction of this stream with the Ohio is the town of Columbia, which rose out of the woods a few years ago with great rapidity and promise, and now is on the decline, being sickly, and subject to insulation, when the waters of the Miami are backed up the country by the rise of the Ohio in the spring; the current of the Ohio being so impetuous as to hinder the Miami from flowing into the stream.

Directly on turning into Cincinnati, I saw Licking river on the Kentuckey shore. It is a large stream navigable for canoes and bateaux a considerable way up. The town of Newport is situated on the point formed by the junctions of this river with the Ohio.

Cincinnati is opposite the mouth of Licking on the right hand shore. It is four hundred and ninety-three miles from Pittsburg, was once the capital of the North Western territory, and is now the largest town of the Ohio state, though not the seat of government; Chilicothé being the capital, and the residence of the governor and legislative body. The town consists of about three hundred houses, frame and log, built on two plains, the higher and the lower, each of which commands a fine view of the opposite shore, the mouth of Licking, the town of Newport, and the Ohio waters, for a considerable way, both up and down. The public buildings consist of a court-house, prison, and two places of worship; and two printing presses are established, which issue papers once a week. Cincinnati is also the line of communication with the chain of forts extended from Fort Washington to the westward, and is the principal town in what is called Symmes's Purchase. The garrison end of the town, is now in a state of ruin. A land office for the sale of Congress lands at two dollars per acre, is held in the town, and made no less than seventeen thousand contracts last year, with persons both from Europe and all parts of the United States. So very great and extensive is

the character of the portion of the state of which this town is the port and capital, that it absorbs the whole reputation of the country, deprives it of its topographical name, and is distinguished by that of the "Miamis." In Holland, Germany, Ireland, and the remote parts of America, persons intending to emigrate, declare that they will go to the "Miamis."

This reputation gives considerable consequence to the town, by adding to its population, and still more by peopling the immense regions of its back country. These regions are already making rapid advances in agriculture, and as Cincinnati is the emporium, its trade must be soon considerable, and ultimately great. The commerce at present is conducted by about the keepers of thirty stores, who issue to farmers and settlers all manner of British goods, and foreign and domestic spirits, in return for which they receive produce which is converted into cash on being forwarded down the river to New Orleans and the West Indies. The produce is abundant, but simple. It consists chiefly of flour and provisions, in beef, butter, and pork. The prices can hardly be adequate to the labour. Flour is three dollars and a half per barrel. Pork two and a half per cwt.; beef two; and butter sixpence per pound. I have no conception how the farmer succeeds. The merchants, however, make an exorbitant profit; those of four years standing, who come with goods obtained at Philadelphia and Baltimore *on credit*, have paid their debts, and now live at their ease.

Of the society of the town it is difficult to give you a just idea, as from its heterogeneous nature it does not admit of being described by leading and characteristic features. The town was originally settled by a few of the officers and men of the disbanded western army; they and their offspring are known by certain aristocratic traits, a distinction in living, and a generous hospitality. These were followed by a number of Dutch and Germans, who are remarkable solely for domestic parsimony, industry, and moral conduct. A body of Irish next settled, and they too have their particular walk, in which they exhibit many virtues blended with strange absurdities, the one making them estimable, and the other rendering them ridiculous; the one manifesting itself in acts of humanity, public spirit and benevolence, and the other in duelling, points of honour, ruin, and flagitiousness! To complete the nations of this population, some French emigrants took up their abode in Cincinnati, and their publicity consists in their introduction of

the dance, music, billiards, and the fabric of liqueurs, sweet-meats, and savoury patties.

I believe you will allow, that until these contrasted materials amalgamate, there is no possibility of predicating any fixed opinion of the society they compose. I am happy notwithstanding to affirm, that in general the people of Cincinnati make a favourable impression; they are orderly, decent, sociable, liberal and unassuming, and were I compelled to live in the western country, I would give their town a decided preference. There are among the citizens several gentlemen of integrity, intelligence, and worth. Generals Gano and Finley, and Messieurs Dugan and Moore, would be respected in the first circles of Europe. I experienced from them in my mere quality of stranger, attentions which it would be the blackest ingratitude to forget, and for which they shall ever have my respect and esteem. Nor can I omit telling you that I have been favoured with the friendship and notice of Doctor Goforth, a very skilful physician, and a true lover of learning and science. I derive much pleasure, and glean much information from his society. He has lived in the western world twenty years, and employed the beginning of that period in the study of nature, from which he was turned by the scoffs of the vulgar and the ridicule of fools.

The amusements consist of balls and *amateur* plays, the profits of which going to literary and humane purposes, disposes me to consider them both entertaining and good. But I cannot form any judgment, the winter being the season for such spectacles. I have met with several ladies of comeliness, instruction and taste. They are generally tall, slender, and graceful figures, with much animation and expression. Their affability is very pleasing, being at once remote from a vulgar familiarity and a hypocritical restraint. One young lady in particular is an object of general admiration and regard, pity and commiseration. She is a beauty of the first order, of the most exquisite proportion, and inimitable grace, and was instructed at New York in every art fitted to improve the heart and embellish the mind. Her accomplishments gave delight, her conversations wisdom, and her example instruction. So infinite was her excellence, that it put down all competition of beauty and talent, and the town considered their *Clara* as its pride and boast. On a water excursion a few years ago, Clara and a small party were overtaken by a thunder storm. The first flash struck a friend dead at her feet, and the second nearly rent the

boat, and cast it on a rock, from which the remaining party providentially were saved. To the astonishment of all who had known the sensibility and refinement of Clara's mind, she betrayed no horror, uttered no lamentation, and shed no tear! She walked home in silence, and so remains ever since. The flash which deprived her friend of life destroyed her utterance, her hearing and her speech. It destroyed the faculty of mental feeling, the recollection of the past; and the elegant, once instructive Clara, on my introduction to her, was a Medician Venus, dumb, deaf, and inimitably beautiful, though entirely insensible and terrifically cold. Her countenance has lost the happy faculty of mental expression, and has assumed a frigid, void, or a constant shew of vacant astonishment distressing to the feeling spectator. In other respects the injury done her senses extends no more than to the obliteration of all actions anterior to her sufferings. She reads, frequents society, and expresses herself on her fingers and on paper with great facility, with reference to future, but never to past events. The young people of the town, of her acquaintance, from a spirit of gallantry and attachment, have all learnt to converse with her on their fingers: with the old, and with strangers, she is fond of using pen and paper. After my introduction, she made signs for a sheet of paper, &c. and wrote with uncommon precision and rapidity a series of questions, leaving blanks for the appropriate answers. I answered the queries, which were generally common-place, and she wrote one more, which demanded, "I cannot comprehend why a man like you can live on waters and in wildernesses. Do tell me what is your motive?" "To study nature and to obtain knowledge," was my reply. She paused for a considerable time, and again wrote a number of queries which occupied a conversation of two hours, and struck some bright coruscations from a mind I am happy to find yet lovely, bright, energetic, and strong.

There is a good market held twice a week: the prices of provisions very nearly the same as at Lexington and at Pittsburg.

LETTER XXIV.

Cincinnati—Built on the Site of an ancient Indian Settlement—An astonishing Curiosity—Other Antiquities—Fine Paintings.

Cincinnati, State of Ohio, July, 1806.

THIS town is situated on the site of an Indian settlement of great extent and antiquity. I had to remark in my last letter, that the modern buildings occupied an upper and lower level or plain; the former Indian ones however were solely confined to the highest lawn, at least no traces of art have ever been discovered on the bottom land next the river, though they abound on that above it, and are so conspicuous as to catch the first range of the eye. Indeed, there is every reason to suppose that at the remote period of the Indian works, the lowest level formed part of the bed of the Ohio. The retreat of the waters is at this hour discernible, and the cultivator often turns up shells, fossils, and petrifactions of aquatic substances, which place the fact beyond contradiction. Some of these are marine productions! A petrified lobster's claw; a conch shell, and quantities of fine coral, elegantly wrought and varied by the richest colours! Surely these infer the residence of water at a distant time, and also I conceive they infer that that water must have been salt! If so, what a vast change must the face of nature have undergone! What vicissitudes of climate! What variations of vegetable produce! What contrast in bulk, form, stature, and duration of animal character and life!

The upper level possesses none of these marine productions, but it has disclosed a curiosity which fills me with greater wonder. A gentleman now living close to Cincinnati, on the upper bank, where he built an excellent brick house, had occasion for a well, and persevered in digging for water, though he met with none at the depth of sixty feet: continuing on, his workmen found themselves at once obstructed by a substance which resisted their labour, though it evidently was not stone. They cleared the surface, and soon made it appear to be the stump of a tree which had been cut down with an axe! The incisions of an axe were perfectly visible, and the chips made by its

action lay scattered about its roots! The stump was three feet in diameter, and two in perpendicular above its knees. It was nearly of the colour and apparent character of coal, but divested of the friable and fusible quality of that mineral. I have these facts from my very intelligent friend, Dr. Goforth, and twenty others of honour and veracity, who saw the chips cast out of the well before the men broke up the body to which they originally adhered. The roots and stump, from being turgid, tough, saturated, and in part petrified, took considerable time to remove. Ten feet beneath water sprang up, and the well is now in constant supply and high repute. After the most industrious search, I obtained a piece of the stump and an original chip, which I shall preserve with all the devotion becoming their rank, as relics of the most indubitable and remote antiquity. It would occupy volumes to submit the various speculations which traverse the mind while it indulges in reverie on this wide and multifarious subject. Those which strike me the most forcibly are:—

1st, That the tree was undoubtedly antediluvian.

2nd, That the river now called the Ohio did not exist anterior to the deluge, in as much as the remains of the tree were found firmly rooted, in their original position, several feet below the bed of that river.

3d, That America was peopled before the flood, as appears from the action of the axe, and the cutting down of the tree.

4th, That the antediluvian Americans were acquainted with the use and properties of iron, of the advantage and knowledge of which the flood deprived their descendants, and from which it would appear that the same flood swept off every individual from whom that knowledge might be derived. I have said in the first part of this letter, that the upper town is erected on the immediate site of an old Indian settlement. There is no such thing as forming an exact opinion as to its antiquity, though a strong judgment may be formed from the growth of the timber now in bloom and decay, on many parts of the remaining works. Several trees were found six feet in diameter, and some nine, hollowed out by the assiduity of time from the summit to the base! The remaining Indian works consist of,

1. A barrow, or funeral pile.
2. An enclosed or fortified camp.
3. Mounds.

The barrow is seated in the centre of the upper and lower

town, on the edge of the upper bank. The principal street leading from the water is cut through the barrow, and exposes its strata and remains to every person passing by. Children often amuse themselves in undermining the banks, till large quantities fall down, in which they search for, and often find arrow points, beads, and many other curiosities. I made a regular search myself, and found the barrow constructed precisely after the manner of that I described to you near the banks of the Muskingum. The dead repose in double horizontal tiers; between each tier are regular layers of sand, flat surfaced stones, gravel and earth. I counted seven tiers, and might have discovered more, but was compelled to desist from the annoyance of the multitude gathering about me. Three out of seven skeletons were in great preservation, and in a progressive state of petrefaction. With the dead were buried their ornaments, arms and utensils, as appears from my having turned up, in less than three hours scrutinizing, my hat full of beads, several arrow points, two stone hatchets, many pieces of pottery, and a flute made of the great bone of the human leg. It is a very curious instrument, with beautifully engraved or carved figures representing birds, squirrels, and small animals, and perforated holes in the old German manner. When breathed into it emits tones of great melody, but fails in quick and lively transitions. The modern Indians were found without any instrument of this nature. Such were the objects I obtained, but I am informed by Dr. Goforth, that when the street was formed through the barrow, a great variety of interesting and valuable relics were brought to light; among which were human grinders, which on a moderate calculation bespoke a man of four times the size of the modern human race, some brass rings, and an ivory image eminently executed, denoting a female figure in the act of pressing a child to her naked bosom.

Having restored the bones and other substances to the barrow, and closed up the orifice I had made, I went, full of anxiety and perturbation, which I could neither stifle or conceal, from house to house, in pursuit of an image, the material character and description of which differed so essentially from any object ever before discovered in the western world. I was not so successful in my pursuit as to see or procure the image. I obtained, however, some gratification from its history, and a knowledge of the hands in which it is placed. It seems that the catholics availed themselves of the image, and made it a testimony of the anti-

quity of their religion and the extensive range of their worship, by attempting to prove thereby, that the Indian idol was nothing less than a *Madonna and child*, and that the Roman catholic religion by the command of God was the first which rose in the earliest Christian age of the east, and the last which set in the west, where it suffered extinctions by a second deluge, of which all allow the traces evidently appear. The exultation of these enthusiasts spread the reputation of the "graven image" far and near, when an officer under the general government descending the Ohio, obtained it by purchase from the proprietor, and sent it to Mr. Jefferson, who no doubt has made a communication to the American Philosophical Society, and whose account I have infinite anxiety to hear.

The account by tradition says, the idol is seven inches high, the figure full length, the costume a robe in numberless folds, well expressed, and the hair displayed in many ringlets. The child naked near the left breast, and the mother's eyes bent on it with a strong expression of affection and endearment. Thus I give you the facts as they came to my knowledge, on this extraordinary subject; they are dark and mysterious I allow, and yet I cannot cast on them any illumination.

I next visited the fortified camp, which is within five minutes walk of the barrow. It lies close to the well from the bottom of which the remains of the tree were thrown up. Of the camp there is nothing whatever visible but a wall forming a true circle; which contains about three acres of perfectly level ground. The wall is of earth; may be about seven feet high, and twenty broad at its base. On its surface grew several trees, the stumps of which remain, and measure from six to sixteen feet in circumference. The gentleman who sunk the well is the proprietor of the camp, and he has been obliged, for the uniformity of his other improvements, to include segments of the great circle in his garden, and enclosed grounds. This necessity is much to be lamented, as it obstructs the *coup d'œil* of the entire work, and predicts in time its complete dissolution. A few years ago it was a correct uninterrupted circle of great beauty and ornament to the town; it is now cut and intersected by walls and fences, but easily made out on looking them over, and following the inclination of the ring. There is one remarkable circumstance attending this wall, that it has no ditch or dyke on either side; and as it is composed of materials supposed to be brought from the shore, there remains no

doubt of its being erected with great difficulty, and at the expence of much assiduity and time. This, and numerous other fortified camps, also prove that the Indians of a former period were not wandering tribes, but a people associated under a regular form of government; acquainted with certain laws of nations, and having bounds to their own, which their camps and strongholds shewed a determination to value and to protect. In the eastern states, where land is sterile and poor, ancient fortifications are rarely met with, and there it is probable a wandering life was preferred to a permanent abode, where existence was to be maintained by perpetual industry and labour.

The mounds are as far from the camp as the camp is from the town. There are two which are within pistol shot of each other. It appears evident that the largest of the two was erected for a post of look-out and observation; at least it is so admirably calculated for that purpose, that the Americans during the Indian war, stationed on it a picquet, and even levelled about twenty feet of its summit. It stands on a plain, is of a spheroidal form, sixty feet high, and one hundred and fifty through its longest horizontal base. I am informed by a continental officer who levelled the summit by order of General St. Clair, that the view from the mound was very extensive when in its primitive state. He could see both up and down the river, across to the Kentuckey shore, and all the passes in the mountain, in the rear of the settlement and camp. He also observed that the mound ran nearly to a spiral point, which circumstance induced General St. Clair to conceive it a barrow of the dead, and when the twenty feet were struck off the top, he attended to examine the substance, but could discover nothing on which to establish his opinion. However indisputably caculated it is for a place of observation, I am strongly inclined to meet the General in his conception, and to believe that the mound was originally intended for the mausoleum of a single chief who lies interred immediately under the stupendous heap. My enquiries have enabled me to determine, that there were western nations who honoured their principal sachem and warrior with separate sepulchres placed on the highest grounds, therefore it cannot be rash to consider this the mausoleum of an individual, and also a place of look-out when necessity and circumstances shewed eligible for that intent. The mound adjacent to it, and which is less by twenty degrees, and perfectly round, was certainly a sepulchre. It stands in a part of the plain which is occupied as a race-ground, and the

starting-post rises from its centre. When the post was first sunk, the workmen discovered human bones, and after much examination, traced the remains of one skeleton, and no more.

At the back of the town, and near the foot of the hills which lie between the plain and back country, are two more mounds of an equal size, and about twenty feet high from the centre of their base. I explored one minutely, by cutting a trench from east to west four feet in diameter. At the depth of ten feet I came to some heavy stones, underneath which was a body of composition resembling plaster of Paris. This broke with great difficulty, and exposed a few fragments of a human skeleton extended on a bed of a similar nature with the covering. Determined to ascertain whether the monument was erected in memory of one person, I broke through the bed, and found underneath a stratum of stones, gravel, and earth nearly to the bottom, mixed with bones appertaining to the human frame. The few fragments I carefully collected consisted of one tibia, two pieces of the thigh bone, and the right upper and the left under-jaw. Little observation was necessary to shew that they were not the fragments of the skeleton of an adult! This was a more important fact than I expected to establish, and though my enquiry into the mound was attended with expence and trouble, I considered myself amply recompensed, by proving in the first instance, that mounds in general, are the sepulchres of eminent individuals; and in the second, that the nation who erected the mound in which the child was buried, was governed by a line of hereditary chiefs, as is evident from the nature and distinction of the interment of an infant, who certainly could not have been an elected chief. That the remains belonged to an infant is clear, both from their diminutive size and want of sockets for the cutting-teeth of either jaw.

Weary of grave-digging, bones, and skeletons, I shall say but two more words on the subject, and then fly to some other. I consider mounds as the tumuli of kings and chieftains, and barrows as sepulchres of the vulgar dead. The former were subject to vary in size according to rank of the individual, or the estimation in which he was held; and the latter varied according to the population of the nation, and increased with number of the interred. Mounds are spherical figures, and barrows are oblong squares. Under particular circumstances, mounds have been made to answer the purpose of a look-out, and in consequence, are often found

distant from the camp, and commanding the most extensive views; but barrows, from having never received a varied purpose, are constantly discovered in the close vicinity of a town, or adjacent to a fort. There is no greater mistake than that which has so long prevailed, that barrows have been erected on fields of battle, to cover and to distinguish the slain. This opinion arose from the circumstance of arrow-points and other war instruments being promiscuously found with the bones. It is now well ascertained that such objects, and many others, both of ornament and use, were always interred with the dead to whom they appertained; and the construction of the barrows, the order, strata, and essential difference in the preservation and decay of the skeletons, prove the whole to be the progressive work of numerous years, and not the hasty production of a people lavishing honors on the slain in battle.

The next relic of antiquity in Cincinnati, is a spherical stone, found a few years since on the fall of a large portion of the bank of the river. It is a green stone, twelve inches in every diameter, divided into twelve sides, each side into twelve equal parts, and each part distinguished by characteristic engravings. What these engravings represented, none of my informers could describe. Some told me they were irregular etchings of which nothing could be made, and others affected to see in them the most scientific design, embracing a mystery, the clue of which it was impossible to find. The fate of this beautiful object, so interesting to science and the history of former times, is not to be traced with the precision to be desired. It is said, that a stranger enamoured with its characters, procured and took it down the river, and that it has since found its way to the federal city, and to the cabinet of arts in Philadelphia.

From the idea I allow myself to form of it, I conceive the stone to have been formed for astronomical calculation, and to convey a knowledge of the movements of heavenly bodies. When I connect this reasonable conjecture with the facts of brass circles having been found impressed with figures, known in Europe by the term "Eastern," I am again tempted to believe that a passage was once open between this country and the north of China and the Indies.

You may recollect in a former letter from Marietta, I mentioned the probability of obtaining some further information respecting the pyrite which I found in artificial balls in a fortified camp near the Muskingum, from Colonel Ludlow of this place. He is dead—a circumstance I regret the

more, as he had the reputation of possessing the learning of a scholar and the manners of a gentleman. Doctor Goforth, who was his particular friend, tells me, that no person was so well versed in the ancient history of his country, (America) that he sought after subjects of antiquity, and data on which to found certain and irrefragable conclusions, with great ardour and zeal, and that had he lived, he would have given the world his fund of interesting research and philosophic enquiries, to beat down the absurdity and errors it had been so long cultivating and acquiring. Accompanied by the doctor, I went to the late colonel's country residence, about five miles from town, and had the mortification to find that he had hardly been dead before the women of his household *cleared the house of his rubbish*, and burnt his manuscripts and other *useless papers*.

Much of the collection being thrown promiscuously into the yard, my friend and I commenced a search through courts, dung-hills, stables, swineries, dove-cotes, &c. &c. and had the good fortune to find—

The horns of a palmated elk—The strait horns of the American elk—The grinder of a mammoth, weighing seven pounds—and a ball of mineral, weighing twenty pounds.

The three first objects speak for themselves, the last is a ball of pyrites, which Dr. Goforth remembers the colonel to have told him he took out of a heap of several hundred which he discovered near an old Indian settlement on the banks of the Little Miami of the Ohio, and that he had also found another heap in an artificial cave on the banks of the Sciota. The colonel was never heard to express an opinion on the rise or utility of the balls to the Indians, and the doctor and myself remained equally in the dark, conceiving merely and widely that they were for religious, gymnastic, or warlike purposes. The ball we obtained consisted of copper pyrites, or quartz, and on our return to town, Dr. Goforth had the goodness to present me with a very fine piece of calcareous spar with sulphureous pyrites from the lakes, which makes my specimens more complete and valuable.

I was about to close this letter, from a conviction that I had related every thing of interest in the place from which it is dated, till my very intelligent friend, the doctor, told me that he was often struck with the beauty of some pictures, the property of an acquaintance in the town, and he recommended me strongly to visit them before my departure. I went, and to my great surprise, found, in the very

mean apartments of a small frame house, inhabited by an old family descended from English origin, the following pictures, which I have no doubt are the works of the great painters whose names I have set after the descriptions.

A Dutch family at a repast—*Vandyke.*

Two Flemish landscapes, including sheep, cows, and other cattle, admirably expressed—*Vandervelt.*

A monk in the act of private devotion—*Anon.*

A nun recluse in her cell—*Anon.*

Group of dancing boys, and female *muscecenne*—*Correggio.*

Two naval views; the style ancient, the ships and costume Roman.

These valuable paintings are in excellent preservation, being executed on copper and oak, except the group of dancing boys, which is on canvas, and much worn.

LETTER XXV.

An Excursion to the Country of the Miamis—Lebanon Town—Interesting Sect of Quakers—Continuance of the Excursion—Horses of the Western Country—State of Farming in the Neighbourhood.

Cincinnati, Aug. 1806.

AFTER dispatching my last letter to you from hence, I went on an excursion through the celebrated country called the Miamis, which is a portion of the Ohio state, divided into counties, ranges, and townships, in the manner of every other place under the administration of the federal government. Being acquainted with the lands adjoining the Sciota, and as high up as the Pickawee Plains, I limited my view of the Miamis to the territory thus bounded by the Ohio on the south, the mountains of the lakes on the north, the Little Miami on the east, and the Great Miami and Mad River on the west; and I directed my excursion accordingly.—Furnished with good horses for myself and Cuff, and a pack-horse for carrying a small tent and provisions, I set off on a north course for a town called Lebanon, thirty miles distant, and lying exactly central between the two Miamis. The first five miles were hilly, but afforded fine rich intervals for farms, and on a creek which I passed in that distance, were two mills that had done much

business that season, and had excellent flour on hand, at four dollars per barrel, and Indian corn meal for one shilling and sixpence per bushel, of the best quality.

For ten miles further on, the land was broken, heavily timbered, and but little cleared. The remaining fifteen miles to Lebanon were nearly the best I ever viewed, and settled considerably for so new a country. The farms were numerous, well improved, and the houses and barns on them built with great care and industry.

Lebanon contains about two hundred inhabitants, dwelling in about forty neat log and frame houses. A place of worship and school-house are also erected, and the town in every respect bids fair to prosper and increase with unprecedented success. Seated in the midst of the finest tract of land in the world, and that tract already thickly settled by a hardy and industrious people, it cannot fail to succeed, if not reduced to a premature ruin by the sudden and violent visitations which have trampled under foot the aspiring hopes of other settlements of the same state. The town is not considered unhealthy, nor is the immediate vicinity poisoned by ponds or swamps. The inhabitants, though few, are composed of several nations, who unite in forming a character of a laborious and religious cast. Their industry is manifest in the extensive improvements and comfortable abodes, all effected within the space of five years, and their religion is displayed in the fashion of their hats and clothes, but more respectably in their decent and moral conduct. One sect has made itself so conspicuous, that I cannot pass it over in silence.

A number of families, several years ago, withdrew from the quakers in the eastern states, in whose tenets they had been bred and instructed, and followed a woman, Jemima Wilkinson, whom they accepted as their religious leader, into the Genessee country, soon after its establishment by Sir William Pulteney. Disgusted with the immoral conduct of that woman, several of the principals apostatized a second time, returned to the great towns of the state, promulgated an entirely novel system of religion, recruited their numbers, and repaired to the western country, where they purchased conjointly the fine and extensive tract of land on which Lebanon now stands. This purchase they vested in the hands of an individual, who holds it in trust, and for the use of "the poor and humble followers of the Lord;" the grand tenet of the society being the renunciation of worldly wealth, the total abandonment of riches, and the

strict and rigid adherence to the doctrine of "take up the cross and follow me." In consequence the individuals of the sect hold nothing as their own, not even the fruit of their labour; every dollar not required by their necessary wants is turned over to the person holding the land in trust, who is their treasurer and high-priest, and in whom every thing is vested as for the service of the Lord. As their present high-priest has been the principal author of the system, I will give you his proceedings in the literal way they occurred since his coming into the western country, from which you can learn a correct idea of so singular a society.

On the completion of the purchase he had the whole surveyed and located into sections of six hundred and forty acres, and into half and quarter sections for the use of small families. He then ordered his flock to assemble beyond the boundary of the purchase, where they formally abjured all worldly wealth, and literally *taking up crosses* prepared for the purpose, followed their leader to the particular sections he had marked for their respective use. The unappropriated sections he disposed of to persons joining the society, by receiving *in trust for the Lord* all their wealth, and by giving them the use of land in proportion to the sacrifice. None of his followers are allowed to live in towns. He settled Lebanon with mechanics and tradesmen for the accommodation of the society, but not as a residence for any of its members. The produce of the sale of town lots, and the profits on all farms he receives into his treasury for the use of the contrite in heart, the meek and lowly followers of the Lord; and that money he disposes of, according to the primitive regulations of the society, in this manner.

He maintains teachers for the instruction of both sexes. He provides them on their marriage with a house, farm, implements of husbandry, cattle, and stock of all kinds, to be held by them in trust for similar benefits to be conferred on their children, and those of others. He maintains the sick and supports the needy, and sees that there is no want in the land. His province also extends to the administration of justice, and to the settlement of all private differences without the interference of the public law.

What a strange association! How wild in theory and absurd in practice! must be the cry of every person endowed with sense. To renounce property and still to retain the advantages of riches: to give up all, and still to be placed beyond the apprehensions of want; to abandon children to the care of Providence, and still to find them secured both

in instruction and wealth; to lay by nothing against casualties and sickness, and yet to know there is ever aid at hand, are paradoxes which must stagger the mind, and reduce it to a state of confusion and unbelief. Astonishing as it may appear, the facts admit of no paradox; experience banishes the necessity even of a philosophic doubt. The society is flourishing to the highest degree! public and individual happiness every where resound; want, misery, and ignorance are entirely unknown, and the treasury of the high-priest overflows. Such is the actual state of the society!

They have no particular place of worship. Their law is, that God resides and is to be worshipped every where. In order that two or three may be gathered together, they associate according to the situation and convenience of a few families, and receive instruction from whoever present is able and willing to give it. Like the sect near Pittsburg, they affect the style of little children, and often sit and play on the ground. From this religious exercise they have acquired the name of *shakers and tremblers*, which they allow to be a vulgar term of derision, in lieu of their own title, which is no more than the simple one of *The Children*. And where that term might imply infants in fact, they add Children of the Lord. Their high-priest they call their leader: he is elected for one year, or during pleasure; and is eligible to be re-elected from year to year; he has the assistance of two persons, the one as an accomptant and the other as an itinerant, whose duty consists in visiting every settlement, and examining into the conduct moral and economical, of each individual member, which conduct he reports to his superior, and he, on dissatisfaction, convenes a meeting of the society, whose vote excludes any person from their sect, against whom profanity, idleness, or any species of vice is proved. This vote also excludes the branded person from all participation in the goods of the Lord; and exposes him to the forfeiture of all the funds he might have given their leader, to be at the Lord's disposal. This one law has more force in its operation than all the volumes of penal law now extant. It exercises a complete dominion over religion and morality, and makes it the decided interest of every person of the sect to pursue an unblemished and industrious life. In summer, I should have observed, they meet their leader on Sundays, in some open space shaded by trees, and as they bring provisions and remain long on the ground, the day is spent in the manner of a religious feast.

On leaving Lebanon, I took the Chilicothé road, if that can be called a road which is no more than a path through a wood, the trees marked with an axe to indicate the direction. The first seven or eight miles from Lebanon consisted of remarkably fine wood land checquered with improvements made by "the children." The remainder of my day's journey, seventeen miles to the borders of the Little Miami, was for the most part through a forest swamp swarming with snakes and insects, and emitting a sickening and nauseous stench. The soil was deep and black, and cast up flowers of extreme richness and beauty considerably above my horse's head. When population increases, this swamp will afford the most productive farms in the state. It can be purged and sweetened with very little labour, as it is intersected by creeks and streams in every direction, and needs nothing more than clearing off the heavy timber to give access to wind and sun, and forming drains of communication with the creeks and streams, which in their turn communicate with the two Miamis, and the Ohio river.

The road is so miry and deep, that I found it impossible to travel above two miles an hour. It was sun-set when I arrived at the Little Miami, on the banks of which, and on a fine open spot to which the air had access, I encamped for the night.

As night advanced, the noise of vermin, reptiles, and insects was so great, particularly the clamour of the great bull-frog, that I felt very little disposition to lie down, though the labour of the day had considerably fatigued me. The uproar which proceeded from the swamp through which I had that day travelled, is indescribable. The voices were too discordant, too numerous, varied and mixed, to submit to verbal description. Let it suffice that the *din* was horrid and unceasing, and so loud, that it obstructed conversation, and appeared to defy the languor of lassitude or the strong dominion of an oppressive sleep. Nature, however, becoming more faint I got some repose, and lay on a tent of dry leaves till near day light.

I was not a little surprised to hear immediately on waking, and before there was any strength of dawn, both the warble and the song of the nightingale. I supposed it to proceed from the Virginia red bird, or from the mocking-bird, but on attention to the voice minutely and attentively, I found it express more judgment and skill than I ever knew such birds to exercise, and to have all the variation and compass of the real nightingale. I must believe it was the

mocking-bird commencing with his own native powers and natural song, before he stooped to copy the less exquisite airs of others. He began with a low and timid voice, and prepared for the hymns to nature, by essaying his powers and attaining his organs; by degrees the sound opened and swelled; burst it into vivid flashes; flowed with smooth volabiiity; sunk into murmurs, and shook with rapid and violent articulations, pouring the soft breathings of love, gratitude or joy from its inmost soul. For fear such continued richness might satiate the ear, the strains were, at intervals, relieved by powers which shed elevation and dignity throughout the song.

It is not a little singular too, that like the nightingale this fascinating bird chooses the silent hour of night for his chaunt, which heightens the general effect, and hinders any rival or any noise from disturbing the charming and solemn scene. I could not discover the songster; his notes reached me from the opposite side of the stream. The day soon after appeared, and I pursued my journey, after having given the horses a few ears of corn, which were carried on the pack-horse for that purpose.

I must stop to observe a great singularity in the character of the horse of the western country. However wild he may be at his home, and when turned into enclosed pastures, he never wanders from his rider in the woods. He will graze about, and pick up shrubs and provender from the roots of trees, but never loses sight of his camp or the cheering light of its fire. He too is sensible of fear, and protection: he trembles in the gloom of the woods, and on the most distant howl of the wolf, approaches the fire, and often draws up, and looks into the tent of his master!

Determined not to penetrate the woods till the sun had the power of exhalation, I rode along the river bank, which I found extravagantly rich and beautiful. The shrubs and flowers grew to a great size; and for the first time since my arrival in the country, I met with the *Magniola altissima*, which I considered a testimony of a change of soil and climate, as it requires both of a very prolific nature. Having rode about two hours the country began to open, and I passed several well improved plantations; fields teeming with an abundant harvest; houses neatly built, and cattle and stock of an excellent quality grazing in large meadows, the hay of which had been long carried off the ground. I rode up to a cheerful looking farm house, and met with a

very hearty reception from its proprietor, an Englishman, who came into the Miamis on the strength of their high reputation, and his dislike to the eastern states, where he had first settled. During a breakfast, prolonged by a most interesting conversation, I learned from Mr. Digby (so was he called) that the best he could do in the western country, or that any farmer could do, *was just not to starve.* The price of produce was so low, and that of labour so high, that very little profit attended the most laborious exertions of industry. Indian corn, in particular, carried a value so mean, that he never offered to sell it, and for his wheat he made into flour, he could not get but about three dollars per barrel, and even that had for the most part been taken in goods for which he had not always consumption or use. In consequence he was about to abandon a system so little advantageous, and take to grazing cattle, breeding hogs, and rearing horses for distant markets and foreign use, where *money* was to be obtained, and profit equal to the extent and importance of the business: he had already reaped the benefit of this plan, having sent his son in the spring of the year with a boat carrying two hundred live hogs to New Orleans, where they sold all round at the rate of twelve dollars per cwt. though they cost him nothing but the expence of the voyage and some small attendance in the woods, where they breed and maintain themselves all the year round.

Before the winter, Mr. Digby proposes taking a drove of cattle and horses over the mountains to the great eastern marts of Baltimore and Philadelphia.

Thus from the nature of the country, and the tyranny of circumstances, we find an industrious, intelligent, active man, abandons a heavy course of agriculture, and turns his views to a system of farming from which immense wealth is to be derived, though his nearest market, Baltimore, is at the distance of eleven hundred miles; and New Orleans from sixteen to seventeen hundred!

He did not consider the spot he was on unhealthy, but there were swamps in the rear of his plantation which emitted infectious smells, and caused a nausea when he had occasion to remain in or near them. His fine meadows were wood swamps till he cleared off the trees, and drained them into creeks communicating with the low country and with the river. He has no other fault with the land than that it is too rich—forcing every thing into a stalk like timber, and making the hay so coarse, that he often destroys the first

growth, and only saves the after-grass when a foot high or under. The Indian corn produces one hundred bushels per acre, and grows on a stem of such strength, that cattle, when it spreads its tossel, and has shed or received its farinaceous impregnation, are allowed to rove among it without being capable of rendering it any injury. The land must be weakened and reduced by successive and heavy crops of corn, before it be fit for wheat. Put into unreduced land, wheat rambles ten or twelve feet high, and bears little fruit. Fifty and sixty bushels to an acre is a common crop! Vegetables succeed remarkably well, and fruit-trees bear at times in too great profusion, and at other times do not bear at all. The depth of the soil was never ascertained. Where drains were made twelve feet deep, nothing but a rich black mould appeared—a compost of decayed vegetable substance accumulating some thousand years!

Furnished with this information, and refreshed with a good breakfast, I took leave of Mr. D. and pursued my journey, the particulars of which you will have in my next.

LETTER XXVI.

Dayton Town, its fine Situation—A Snake, or Snapping Tortoise—Timber of this Country—The Sugar Maple—An Indian Camp.

Cincinnati, August, 1806.

ON leaving Mr. Digby's I continued my journey up the Little Miami for about ten miles, when I arrived at some hilly and broken land which deterred me from pursuing a northern route any longer, especially as I understood that the ground held similar features as high up as the Pickawee Plains, and other prairies, with the locality and nature of which I was previously acquainted. Accordingly I bent a west by north course, by compass, which I judged would strike the Great Miami, near Dayton, a small town lately built on the confluence of that and the Mad River. The distance from the Little Miami, from whence I turned to that part of the Great Miami, for which I made, I conjectured to be between forty-five and sixty miles. The surface in the first instance swelled into the hills and sunk into dales of great fertility and richness, and was much more

sound and less noxious than that I traversed the preceding day. One particular part contained a greater variety of advantage and beauty than I ever beheld embraced in the same compass.

Entering an opening between the feet of two hills, through which rushed a rapid transparent stream, I had a view of a circular piece of ground, so thinly wooded, that the hill by which it was girt was distinctly seen crowned with sumptuous trees, representing a fine amphitheatre, which met the eye in every direction around. The water was visible in many places, and traversed the plain numerous times in search of the *sortie* through which I entered, and through which it dashed with as much exulting violence as if sensible of the liberty it regained. It entered the plain from the north west, in which situation it possessed several falls of sufficient power for any over-shot and grist-mills. This advantage, connected with a variety of others, renders the spot the most eligible imaginable for all the purposes of rural economy and contracted desires of primitive life. The plain contains perhaps twelve hundred acres; the land could easily be cleared; the soil a rich black mould, could be cultivated with little labour; from the facility of being drained, no offensive vapours could arise, and a house seated in the declivity of the hill, from which the stream descended in quick and rapid falls, could command an uninterrupted view of an abundant and enchanting prospect.

From the thin state and growth of the wood there remained no doubt of the plain having been formerly under cultivation. No traces of Indian settlements notwithstanding appeared. I journeyed on for the remainder of the day through a wilderness of melancholy gloom and endless extent.

I stopped to refresh at a fine creek, and while my travelling and faithful companion was occupied in making a fire, I took my gun to range for something for dinner. I had not advanced twenty yards before my dog barked with considerable irritation, and ran round an object which on a nearer approach I discovered to be a snake-tortoise. He was as large as a turtle of sixty pounds weight, and in disposition appeared excessively fierce and mischievous. Whenever he snapt at the dog, which he frequently did with great premeditation and venom, his jaws fell together with much violence and noise. Well convinced that Cuff was acquainted with the natural history of the animal, and all his various attributes, I called him up, and took the dog off, fearful every

moment of his losing his life in so unequal a conflict. I was perfectly right in my conjecture; the Mandanean knew all his habits. While exposed to the dog the creature never presented a vulnerable part; nothing was to be seen but a strong coat of mail, into which he drew his head and legs till prepared to bite, when he prolongated his jaws, or rather neck, which appeared to have great agility, and snapt with a clangour to be heard one hundred yards round. But when the man came up and placed on his back a large flat stone, he exposed his head and feet, and began to move towards the water with more rapidity than I presumed attributable to his nature, or consistent with his magnitude and form. On turning him from the water he seized the stick I made use of in his mouth, and retained his hold, though the man and I raised him from the ground in our efforts to disengage it. It appeared that nothing but fire could induce him to move or to quit his hold. I held a fire-brand near his back, and notwithstanding the extraordinary thickness of the shell, his sensibility took an immediate alarm, and he again advanced with much speed and precipitate action. The Indians call this by a name which implies the snapping tortoise, from its remaining perfectly tranquil till the object is within its reach, on which it makes one sudden snap, and sinks under water. The weight which the one that was the immediate subject of my investigation carried on his back, was inconceivably great, and still he moved without any apparent embarrassment or difficulty. To turn him on his back was very arduous. He resisted with great power and strong manifestations of despair and passion: turning and snapping at the stick whenever he found it acting as a lever upon him. After being upset he made no farther resistance, and died without much struggle. The body was very plump and fine;—I cut from it several steaks, and enjoyed a dinner of exquisite richness and flavour. During the repast I was entertained by the chattering of a flock of paroquets, who had taken up their abode in the trees around me. There were the green and the red neck, that very particular species which are held the most rare in Europe, and which were once highly valued by the Greeks and Romans.

Perfectly refreshed, I again pursued my journey towards the Great Miami, and travelled for four hours over the finest tract of woodland I ever beheld. It was nearly a level, but healthy and dry, in consequence of being intersected by a number of rapid little streams, which carried off rains, and left no ponds for the creation of noxious and putrescent mat-

ter. The soil was deep and black, and the following timber grew in great magnitude, beauty, and abundance:

Maple	Cherry
Sycamore	Buckwood, or Horse Chesnut
Black Mulberry	Honey Locust
White ditto	Elm, two species
Black Walnut	Cucumber Tree
White ditto	Lynn Tree
White Oak	Gum Tree
Black ditto	Iron Wood
Red ditto	Ash, three species
Spanish ditto	Aspin
Chesnut ditto	Sassafras
Butter Nut	Crab Apple Tree
Chesnut	Papaw
Hickory, three species	Plum Tree, several kinds.

Besides these there were nine species of bark, spice, and leather wood bushes; the judas tree, the dog wood, and many others whose names and properties I had not capacity to ascertain. The land in every direction produced vast quantities of grapes of various sorts, and cotton, growing in great perfection, shewed itself to be the natural production of the country. The sugar maple is the most valuable tree for an inland state. One tree can yield about ten pounds of sugar a year, and the labour is very trifling. The sap, which is extracted about February and March, is received in a vessel placed at the foot of a tree, under an incision made for the purpose, and into which a piece of cane is inserted, and through which the sap, on a warm day after a frosty night, often flows in a continued stream for several hours. The collected sap of several trees tapped on the same day, is granulated, by the simple operation of boiling, to a sugar very near equal in flavour and whiteness to the best muscovado.

This valuable tree, like every other valuable gift of nature to this western world, is hastening to dissolution and decline. In the spring of the year *sugar camps* extend through the whole country; and the persons employed give the trees such great and unnecessary wounds, that their whole virtue runs out, and they perish perhaps in a season. So violent has been the prodigality of the people of Kentuckey, that they have nearly annihilated the maple altogether, by hack-

fing the trees with an axe, and never closing the wounds from which they drew the sap, though they well knew that the timber would perish from such treatment. Persons of better regulated minds tap the trees with an auger, insert a cane, draw off the liquor, and then stop up the flowing and the wound, by which means the trees recover their vigour, and afford fresh supplies from three to twelve years.

I soon came up to a small Indian camp of three tents, and a fire already prepared. I alighted, and advanced with affability and confidence to the oldest man of the party, who gave me his hand with much courtesy, and afterwards offered me his pipe with an expression of great kindness. I received it as the calumet of peace, and entered into an alliance of friendship, the violation of which, on either side, according to the Indian's own rule, "would be deserving the wrath of the Good Spirit, and the immediate punishment of Heaven."

Having fallen into such excellent company, I resolved to remain among them for the night, and, with permission, I pitched my tent, and made my fire immediately in the vicinity of the spring which the Indians had chosen for their camp. I soon discovered that the party I fell in with was a family of the Mingoes—a nation formerly powerful, inhabiting the banks of the Scioto, and now attached to that river, though reduced to the small number of forty-five!—The family consisted of a father, a married son and daughter, and five of their children, one of which was at the breast, and another but three years old. They manifested no manner of surprise on my arrival, and expressed no curiosity at the sight of the objects with which I was furnished, though they differed so entirely from any they had ever before beheld. Nor was I asked from whence I came; whither I was going; or, any other question whatever. This little appetite to curiosity has exposed almost all Indian nations to the charge of stupidity and insipience of character. Never was charge more ill-founded and unjust. Their apparent want of curiosity is the result of habit growing out of maxims, and the first instructions of their youth—which tend to suppress idle enquiries.

After a very interesting conversation with Onamo, the head, I retired to rest, and reposed with the utmost peace, security, and confidence.

LETTER XXVII.

Dayton—a rich and fine Country—Trees, Shrubs, and Flowers—Humming Birds—Mad River—Situation of the Inhabitants on its Banks—The Great Miami—Hamilton Town.

Cincinnati, August, 1806.

NEXT morning, after passing through a delightful range of country, I reached the town of Dayton, which is composed of about forty houses, standing on a point of land formed by the junction of the Mad and the Great Miami rivers. I put up at an excellent inn, kept by a Dutch family, whom I found well disposed and assiduous in business. The site of the town is more favourable to commerce than to health. On the rise of the Miami, the waters of the Mad River are subject to *back*, and to inundate its bank in the vicinity of the town, and consequently to spread the seeds of pestilence and fever. The inhabitants, principally Dutch and Irish, had lost the florid feature of their own country, and the children looked pale, emaciated, and languid. These unfavourable appearances are entirely to be attributed to the local cause I have mentioned—for the inhabitants of high prairies, or meadows, and of other parts distant from the inundations, look perfectly cheerful, and as fresh and high complexioned as can be expected in persons, who, for nine months in the year, are in a constant state of copious perspiration, owing as well to the excessive heat of the sun, as to the perpetual toil imposed by necessity on all new settlers.

The principal stream of emigration has, for a few years, flowed towards the Mad River. After a variety of folly, disappointment, and error, the unfortunate and the perturbed in spirit, have at length found and fixed upon a truly rich and distinguished abode. I rode forty miles up the right bank, and returned on the left to Dayton; and must candidly confess, I never beheld a tract of land so favoured by nature, and so susceptible of improvement by art. Nearly the whole tract is a chain of prairies, partly obscured from each other by groves of magnificent trees, and shrubberies diffusing every species of perfume, and exhibiting the bloom and radiance of every flower. Among the trees the

splendid magnolia and tulip are found, and among the shrubs are seen, the althea, arbutus, honey-locust, and various other aromatics. The uncultivated portions of the prairies abound in flowers of such luxuriance and height, that, in riding through, it is often necessary to turn them from the face with the whip; and the general herbage, plants, and flowers, rise to the saddle skirts. The most conspicuous flowers were the geranium, holy oak, and passion-flower, to which the sweet pea, and many blossoming creepers, ran up and closely adhered. These prairies were formerly the favourite resort of buffaloes, but the wanton carnage committed among their droves, has made them retreat, and pass indignant to less savage lands. Some few herds of deer still linger in their favourite haunt, and at this season browse in safety under the protection of the pasture, which effectually covers them from sight. The little humming birds alone retain their empire over the flowery waste; like bees, they fly from blossom to blossom, nor heed the traveller who stops to admire their burnished plumage and diminutive structure, displaying in their nature the utmost harmony in expression, and the greatest chastity in taste. At the moment they insert their bill into a blossom, and hum with delight, and strong manifestations of passion, there is no difficulty in catching them; but the common practice is to shoot them with sand through a trunk gun. They seldom, however, survive; I met but one instance where they brooked the harsh confinement of the cage. In that instance a French lady had several; she fed them with honey impregnated with scents, lodged in a sponge covered with lace, and disguised in forms and colours which imitated the buds and flowers on which she perceived them, in a state of nature, most partial to dwell. The little creatures repaid her kindness by the most affecting endearments. On freeing them from the cage they generally roved round her for several turns, and then fondly clustered in her extended hand or breast, in which she commonly put some inviting sweets or tempting flowers. She had kept them for fifteen months, during which time they had shewn no disposition to become dull or torpid, though some naturalists alledge, that during the winter season they remain so, suspending themselves by the bill to the bark of a tree; and are awakened into life from that state when the flowers begin to blow, and nature herself assumes the greatest degree of beauty and bloom. There is one fact of more importance, which their existence in particular places proclaims, that is, the fertility of the soil, and the

salubrity of the climate. They never inhabit swamps or countries exposed to a severity of season. Therefore, in fixing in the western world, I know no better guide than the humming bird, who is sure to direct to a sound soil, a short winter, and a long delightful spring.

The Mad River, which meanders through this tract of country, is remarkable for the fine quality of the water, and the great purity of the stream. It received its name in consequence of its perpetual impetuosity, it being the only river in the western country, which does not subside in the summer and fall of the year. All the other rivers owe their great periodical volume to the effusion of ice and mountain snows, whereas the Mad River issues out of Lake Huron, which affords it an equal supply without variation or end. It abounds with fish, and is so transparent, that they are driven with great facility into nets and snares; and are besides, often speared.

The banks of the river are settling with unparalleled success, and the title of all the adjacent lands is already bought up from Congress by individuals, and by speculators, who propose selling again at an advanced price. Most of the prairie-grounds are now as high as from twenty to fifty dollars per acre, and the wood-land adjoining the river, sells at from five to sixteen dollars per acre. I visited at least one hundred farms, and found the inhabitants in the possession of abundance of every common necessary, and every absolute comfort essential to a modest and unassuming life. Nor does their situation or temptations suggest any desires but what may be gratified by the humble means within their reach. There appeared no manner of discontent among them, and no material difference of rank or fortune to excite it. You, who have been always accustomed to the refinement of luxury, will scarce be able to conceive how these settlers, with no other clothing than coarse home-made apparel, with no other shelter but a log house constructed with the rudest art, and with no food but of the coarsest kind, and destitute of coffee, tea, wine, and foreign spirits, can enjoy any happiness; and yet, as I observed, to judge from their manners, language, and external appearance, their state may be envied by the wealthy of the most refined nations, because their forgetfulness or ignorance of extragavant desires and vicious pursuits, excludes every wish beyond their present situation, and leaves them virtuous and happy. They are composed of all nations, and live as yet in a kind of native freedom and independence; in a kind of equality of rank

which banishes all distinctions but those of age and merit—for the old controul the parochial administration, and the learned govern the legal and ecclesiastical. However, as population increases, and as towns and villages abound, vice, which appears the propensity of man, will erect its power, and call for the influence of the general regulations of the state, and destroy the innocent and primitive characters which now distinguish the republic of the Mad River. Nothing in truth can be more primitive. Justice is administered with decency, but no form; in the open air, and on Sunday, the people gather together in appointed groves, and silently attend to any person endowed with the grace and talent of instruction.

On returning to Cincinnati, I pursued the Miami to the town of Hamilton for forty miles.

The Great Miami is a very fine river, uninterrupted by falls. Its navigation, as well as that of the Scioto and Muskingum, approaches very near to the navigable waters of the lakes; and like them, the banks towards the source are furnished with springs, coal mines, white and blue clay, and various metallic and mineral productions. It is about two hundred yards wide at its mouth, and is reduced to thirty at the Pickawee towns, notwithstanding which it is navigable fifty miles higher up. The portage from its western branch into the Miami of Lake Erie, is five miles; that from its eastern branch into Sanduskey river, is nine miles.

From Dayton to Hamilton there is an excellent beaten public road, the borders of which are sprinkled with settlements and neat improved farms. The forest trees and lands were of a very superior quality. Hamilton was a fort and garrison during the Indian war, it is now a smart little town on the banks of the Miami, and does considerable business, in collecting the produce of the settlers of the back country, and giving in return goods of every description furnished by the merchants of Cincinnati. Hamilton being but thirty miles from this, I reached it in another day's ride, and met with no occurrence worth remarking.

LETTER XXVIII.

Judge Symmes's Residence—An elegant Mansion, in a charming Situation—His Family, &c.—Indian Territory—Big-bone Lick—Grant's Lick, its excellent Salt—Nitre, Caves, and Hills—Frankfort, the Capital of Kentuckey—Kentuckey River—Its magnificent Banks—Antiquities—Louisville—Passage of the Falls—A terrific Scene.

Louisville, Falls of the Ohio,
Lat. 38. 8 N. Aug. 1806.

I LEFT Cincinnati with an impression very favourable to its inhabitants, and with a higher opinion of its back country than I entertain of any other. Seven miles below my departure, at a place called the North Bend, I stopped to take breakfast with the hospitable judge Symmes, the original proprietor, after the extinction of the Indian title, of the whole of the country lying between the two Miamis. The situation which the judge has chosen for his residence cannot be equalled for the variety and elegance of its prospects. Improved farms, villages, seats, and the remains of ancient and modern military works, decorate the banks of the finest piece of water in the world, and present themselves to view from the principal apartments of the house, which is a noble stone mansion, erected at great expence, and on a plan which does infinite honour to the artist, and to the taste of the proprietor. Differing from other settlers, Mr. Symmes has been studious to give the river sides a pastoral effect, by preserving woods, planting orchards, and diversifying these with corn-fields, sloping pastures, and every other effect incidental both to an improved and rural life. From this expression of elevated judgment, you may be prepared to know that the proprietor formerly resided in England, and after in New York, where he married his present wife, a lady distinguished by elegance of mind, and a general and correct information. They have no children, but there resides with them a Miss Livingston, on whom they fix their affections; and whom they treat with parental kindness and respectful urbanity, the one being due to her intrinsic merit, and the other to her family, which is eminent for birth, property, and talent, in the state of New York.

The judge passes his time in directing his various works, and the ladies read, walk, and attend to various birds and animals, which they domesticate both for entertainment and use. Miss L. is much of a botanist—a practical one. She collects seeds from such plants and flowers as are most conspicuous in the prairies, and cultivates them with care on the banks, and in the vicinity of the house. She is forming a shrubbery also, which will be entirely composed of magnolia, calalpa, papaw, rose, and tulip trees, and all others distinguished for blossom and fragrance. In the middle is erected a small Indian temple, where this young lady preserves seeds and plants, and classes specimens of wood, which contribute much to her knowledge and entertainment. When the beauties of the fine season fade, and the country becomes somewhat inert and insipid, the judge and the ladies remove to Cincinnati, and revolve in its pleasures till fatigued; when they again return to their rural economy, to the prosecution of happy and inoffensive designs. I could with difficulty tear myself from persons so amiable.

Fourteen miles from the North Bend, and twenty-one from Cincinnati, I passed the mouth of the Great Miami; on the right hand shore from it is the western boundary of the Ohio state, and the eastern commencement of the Indian territory, which, in a short time, and with the increase of population, will receive the title of a state, and become the brightest star in the galaxy of the union. The land is for a great part richly wooded, fertile, and applicable to all the purposes of agriculture, and extensive and productive improvement. The territory is upwards of six hundred miles square, and is thus copiously watered: on the north by the Lakes; on the south by the Ohio; and on the west by the Mississippi. Through it also runs, generally in a south course, the Wabash, the Ilinois, and a variety of creeks and streams. Knowing of no obstacles in the river, and finding it to increase in grandeur and safety, I determined on floating all night. I met with no alarms or accident, and arrived in the morning early at Big Bone Lick, thirty-two miles from the Miami.

The salt spring is very weak at the Big Bone Lick. One thousand gallons of water yield but a bushel of salt. About twenty miles back of the Big Bone, is Grant's Lick, one hundred gallons of which make a bushel of salt of a very strong and fine quality. I should think there could be no great difficulty in ascertaining whether the water of Grant's Lick does not issue from a salt rock in its

immediate vicinity. It is to be regretted that no person of leisure and intelligence has yet investigated a subject of such public utility and importance; as I make no doubt that at the same springs which are now worked with little advantage and great labour, water could be found of tenfold strength, and possibly the rock from which it undoubtedly issues. There are other springs in the neighbourhood of the Big Bone Lick, and through several parts of Kentuckey, which are said to be medicinal, and to have the property of relieving various disorders incident to the spring and fall of the year. All that I have met with are strongly impregnated with sulphur, and some so hot as to be within twenty degrees of boiling water. A sulphur spring near the Big Bone Lick turned a dollar black in less than five minutes. Nitre caves, and hills impregnated with nitre, are also common throughout the state, and are worked to great profit, every bushel of earth yielding, on an average, three pounds of nitre.

In the course of another day and night's navigation, I dropped forty-four miles lower down, and put into the mouth of the Kentuckey river, which gives name to the state it intersects nearly in equal halves. It flows in innumerable meanders, and through a very extensive body of good land, except within fifty or more miles of the Ohio, where it is too mountainous for the purposes of a profitable agriculture. It is navigable for loaded boats during a considerable part of the year upwards of one hundred and fifty miles.

Frankfort, the capital of the state, is situated on the west bank, about seventy miles from its confluence with the Ohio. The legislature and the supreme courts hold their sessions there. The state house is a large stone building. The situation is so unhealthy, that the town must eventually be abandoned. There is also a mean little town on one side of the confluence, called William's Port, and another on the other side, of equal insignificance. They are subject to periodical inundation, inductive of fever, and every species of lassitude and sickness. Were it not for this, the towns would rise into eminence, and obtain importance from the growing commerce of the country and the navigation of the river.

The Kentuckey is about ninety yards at its mouth. Its banks, or rather precipices, ought to be reckoned among the grandest natural curiosities of the country. There the astonished eye beholds three hundred, and often five hundred feet of solid perpendicular rock, in some parts of lime-

stone, and in others of fine white marble, chequered with strata of extraordinary beauty and regularity, which gives the river the appearance of an immensely deep and artificial canal, whose rocky banks are crowned with sumptuous cedar, and other trees, of a perpetual verdure.

While exploring the banks, I fell in with some antiquities peculiar to the country. They consist of old forts, not circular, like the many I have pointed out, but oblong, and situated on strong well-chosen grounds, and always contiguous to the best landings of the river. When, by whom, and for what purpose thrown up, is, most unfortunately uncertain. They are undoubtedly very ancient, as there is not the least visible difference in the age or size of the timber growing on or within those forts, and that which grows without; and I never yet could obtain any satisfactory tradition respecting them. Doctor Cutler, who has accurately examined the trees in those forts, and which he thinks, from the appearances are the second growth, is of opinion that they must have been built upwards of one thousand years. One fact is also clear; they must have been the efforts of a people acquainted with some science, and capable of infinite labour; and it is difficult to conceive how they could be constructed without the use of iron tools, and the instruments we are compelled to employ in works of much less magnitude and character. At a small distance from each fort there stands a mound of earth, thrown up in the manner of a pyramid.

The water, owing to its low state, beginning to flow in a very sluggish manner, it took two days and two nights to bear me along to Louisville, from which I now write. The distance seventy-seven miles; in which run the river presented nothing very remarkable, though I observed it increase in breadth, grandeur, and sublimity, and to appear more awful from the height of its banks, and the silence which prevailed from the distance of the habitations of man, and the absence of population and society. I amused myself each day by going ashore with my gun, and walking along for hours together, while the boat dropped down with the stream. I killed several dozen of fine ducks, and one deer, in the act of swimming across the water to elude the pursuit of a wolf that had been long chasing him.

Late in the year, and in the spring season, the river is covered with wild geese, swans, and ducks of various descriptions. In the summer, and at this season, they visit the

lakes, where they breed, and bring up their young in great multitudes. One species of duck alone remain permanently on the river, and that is the worst of the whole kind. I killed a few young turkeys, which were exquisite in taste and flavour. The shores abound in subjects of speculation and interest. Animal and vegetable petrifactions may be picked up nearly at every step, and in the highest state of purity and perfection; so much so, that the characters of each object are distinct and visible, and nothing wanting in the one but sense, softness, and colour, and in the other, the active principle of life, all the waters of the Ohio and of its tributaries are gifted with the powers of petrifaction.

The first intimation I had of the approach to Louisville was the roaring of the falls, which reached me at the distance of fifteen miles. Four miles farther on gave me a fine view of the town, which stands about two miles above the falls, on the Kentuckey shore. The entire *coup d'oeil* is very grand, but the disposition to admire is drowned in the murmur of the waters, and the danger it announces to the mind. As the falls cannot be passed without a pilot, and a number of extra hands to govern the helm and the oars, it is always necessary to look out within five or six miles, and pull in for the left shore before there is a possibility of getting into the suction of the fall stream, and from thence into the vortex of the flood. By my not attending to this in time I was very near perishing. The velocity of the water increased; the uproar of the falls became tremendous, and nothing but the continued and vigorous exertion of the oars saved us from sudden and violent perdition. We rowed one hour across the stream, and got into dull water but five minutes before our deaths must have been certain; whereas had I pulled in on seeing the town, I might have dropped quietly down along the bank, and enjoyed the grandeur and sublimity of the general scene, in the place of experiencing so much labour and apprehension.

Having secured the boat in the mouth of Bear Grass Creek, I walked up to the town of Louisville, which is situated on a high and level bank of the Ohio, about two hundred poles above the commencement of the rapid descent of the water, and contains about eighty dwellings, besides the court house of Jefferson county, and other public buildings. The prospect from the town is very extensive, commanding a view up the river, for some distance above what is called Six Mile island; and on the opposite shore, which is the distance of one mile and a quarter, the eye is

carried over an extent of level country, terminated by the hills of Silver Creek, which are five miles distant, and down the river to Clarkesville, about two miles below.

Here the magnificence of the scene, the grandeur of the falls, the unceasing brawl of the cataract, and the beauty of the surrounding prospect, all contribute to render the place truly delightful, and to impress every man of observation who beholds it, with ideas of its future importance, till he inquires more minutely, and discovers a character of unhealthiness in the place, which forbids the encouragement of any hope of its permanency or improvement.

A ship yard is erected below the rapids by the company of Tavascon, Brothers, and James Berthand, the latter of whom now resides here. This certainly is the most eligible place on the river Ohio; and a greater prospect of the advantages of such an establishment now opens, since the vast territory of Louisiana has become the property of the United States.

Louisville is a port of entry. It is about nine hundred and thirteen miles by way of the river to Philadelphia, and by land about seven hundred. It is seventy miles from Lexington, and forty from Frankfort, in Kentuckey, of which state it forms a part, and conducts all its export, which principally consists of the articles before named, and which are taken in exchange for foreign spirits and British goods, brought into the country by the way of Pittsburg.

The inhabitants are universally addicted to gambling and drinking. The billiard rooms are crowded from morning to night, and often all night through. I am the more concerned to see the prevalence of these vices, as I experience a liberality and attention in the town, which has given me an interest in the general welfare of its people.

I visited the falls of the Ohio on the sand side, and found them occasioned by a ledge of rocks which extend quite across the river, and are hardly to be perceived by the navigator in times of high freshes, unless by the superior velocity of the vessel. When the water is low, as it is at this period, the greater part of the rock becomes visible, and then the passage becomes highly dangerous. There are three channels in the rock through which the water passes. The rapids descend about thirty feet in the length of a mile and a half. The rise of the waters does not exceed twelve or fourteen feet, and has at times sunk to ten inches. A part of the rock remains in the middle of the river, and has never been overflowed, though it wastes every day by

the constant action of the waters, and attrition of pebble stones cast up by the impetuosity of the current. It commands the settlement of Louisville. The fort, however, is situated at the head of the falls.

A pilot for the safe conduct of boats through those falls, has been regularly appointed by the state; he is answerable for all damages sustained through his neglect or bad management. The prices for pilotage of all kinds are regulated by the same authority. A light boat can pass at all times when directed by a skilful pilot; and if it should be found necessary to unload at Bear Grass, and re-load below the rapids, the portage is very inconsiderable, being only two miles.

Notwithstanding the low state of the water, and imminent peril of the passage, I determined on taking the *chute* without farther delay, and lay my boat up below the falls, while I returned to the town, and made a short excursion through the country. I accordingly sent for the head pilot. He informed me that he feared a thunder gust was collecting. The late violent heats, and the prognostics declared by the noise of the falls, and the vapour suspended over them, were strong portentions of a storm, and made the passage too hazardous to be undertaken at the pilot's risk. Whenever I have determined on acting, I have not easily been turned from my intentions. This habit or obstinacy made me persist in going, and I told the pilot to prepare immediately, and that I would take the consequences of any loss on my own head. He agreed, and repaired to my boat with six additional hands, and I shortly followed him, accompanied by two ladies and gentlemen, who had courage to take the fall out of mere curiosity, notwithstanding the great peril with which the act was allied. We all embarked. The oars were manned with four men each. The pilot and I governed the helm, and my passengers sat on the roof of the boat. A profound silence reigned. A sentiment of awe and terror occupied every mind, and urged the necessity of a fixed and resolute duty. In a few minutes we worked across the eddy, and reached the current of the north fall, which hurried us on with an awful swiftness, and made impressions vain to describe. The water soon rushed with a more horrid fury, and seemed to threaten destruction even to the solid rock which opposed its passage in the centre of the river, and the terrific and incessant din with which this was accompanied, almost overcame and unnerved the heart. At the distance of half a mile a thick mist, like volumes of smoke, rose to the skies,

and as we advanced we heard a more sullen noise, which soon after almost stunned our ears. Making as we proceeded the north side, we were struck with the most terrific event and awful scene. The expected thunder burst at once in heavy peals over our heads, and the gust with which it was accompanied raged up the river, and held our boat in agitated suspense on the verge of the precipitating flood. The lightning, too, glanced and flashed on the furious cataract, which rushed down with tremendous fury within sight of the eye. We doubled the most fatal rock, and though the storm increased to a dreadful degree, we held the boat in the channel, took the *chute*, and following with skilful helm its narrow and winding bed, filled with rocks, and confined by a vortex which appears the residence of death, we floated in uninterrupted water of one calm continued sheet. The instant of taking the fall was certainly sublime and awful. The organs of perception were hurried along, and partook of the turbulence of the roaring water. The powers of recollection were even suspended by the sudden shock; and it was not till after a considerable time that I was enabled to look back and contemplate the sublime horrors of the scene from which I had made so fortunate an escape.

When in smooth water, and my mind somewhat collected, I attended to the ladies who had the temerity to honour me with their company through the hazard of the falls. I found them in a very exhausted state. The thunder had entirely unnerved them. I must do them the justice, however, to say, that they shewed great magnanimity :—they suppressed their feeling, and never uttered a cry, for fear of intimidating or interrupting the hands. On getting on shore they quickly recovered, and we enjoyed a pleasant walk back to the town, and passed the evening with that serene delight which is only known to those who have experienced an equally extraordinary and eventful day.

Very shortly there will be no necessity of boats encountering such rocks. A canal is now constructing on each side of the Ohio, by which means vessels may descend at all seasons, and without the possibility of accident or danger. For some time back from eight to twelve boats have been lost annually, and many have been detained for want of water. Therefore the canal must prove a grand acquisition, and extend benefit far and wide. It is to be finished in two years, and will be about three miles in length.

LETTER XXIX.

Excursion from Louisville—View of the Country and its Productions—Kentuckeyan mode of Life—Medicinal Herbs—Birds—Snakes—Remarkable Mocking Bird—A rich Vale—Beardstown.

Louisville, Aug. 1806.

I HAVE just returned from an excursion, of which I transmit you my notes.

Accommodated with two excellent saddle and one good pack-horse for the conveyance of my tent and a few common necessaries, I took a south course with the intention of reaching Beardstown, a rising settlement, about fifty miles off. I was very glad to find that the hills were neither so rugged nor numerous as I had previously experienced in most other parts of the state; but I passed several swamps and ponds, which emitted a most noxious smell, and affected for a moment both the stomach and the head. I found the country exceedingly well timbered. Sugar maple, the coffee, the papaw, the hackberry and the cucumber tree every where abounded. The coffee tree resemble the black oak, and bears a pod, which encloses a seed, of which a drink is made, thought by inferior tastes to be as good as coffee. Besides these, I met with the honey locust, black mulberry, and wild cherry of a very large size, and the magnolia, bearing a beautiful blossom, and shedding an exquisite fragrance. Numerous farms chequered this rich scene, producing wheat, corn, oats, flax, hemp, tobacco, cotton, and vegetables of all kinds, common to a mild climate, and which appeared to yield abundantly. The wheat promising sixty, and the corn one hundred bushels per acre, in many well cultivated plantations. The fruit made no appearance. The trees bear too much at a season, and perish untimely. Sóme peach brandy is manufactured, but no cyder is made in the country. I rode about fifteen or seventeen miles through this kind of mingled scenery, when I stopt at the house of a cutivator whom I had fallen in with on the road, and took such refreshment as we found prepared. I shall mention it to you, because it conveys a

general idea of the mode of living through the state. On entering the house, which was a log one, fitted up very well, the Kentuckeyan never exchanged a word with his wife or his children, who were worrying a kangaroo on the floor before him, notwithstanding he had been absent several days. No tender enquiry, no affection or sentiment, but a contemptuous silence, and a stern brutality, which block up all the avenues to the heart. The poor woman, whom I pitied (for 'tis a fact that the women do not degenerate in proportion to the men, but continue to this day amiable) made a large bowl of drink, called *toddy*, composed of sugar, water, whiskey, and peach-juice, and handed it to her husband with all the servility of a menial; he drank, and handed it to me, who followed his example, and found the liquor excellent.

The dinner consisted of a large piece of salt bacon, a dish of homslie, and a tureen of squirrel broth. I dined entirely on the last dish, which I found incomparably good, and the meat equal to the most delicate chicken. The Kentuckeyan eat nothing but bacon, which indeed is the favourite diet of all the inhabitants of the state, and drank nothing but whiskey, which soon made him more than two thirds drunk. In this last practice he is also supported by the public habit. In a country then, where bacon and spirits form the favourite summer repast, it cannot be just to attribute entirely the causes of infirmity to the climate. No people on earth live with less regard to regimen. They eat salt meat three times a day, seldom or never have any vegetable, and drink ardent spirits from morning till night! They have not only an aversion to fresh meat, but a vulgar prejudice that it is unwholesome. The truth is, their stomachs are depraved with burning liquors, and they have no appetite for any thing but what is highly flavoured and strongly impregnated with salt. Disgusted with the subject of these reflections, I rose from table, cast a dollar on it for my entertainment, and hastening Cuff to prepare my horses, rode off, determined to pay no more such visits, and to want convenience and information sooner than seek them at such a source.

I had advanced but a few miles, when I left the ridgy regions which confine the Ohio, and travelled through a delightful country, presenting to view one extended plain, interspersed with trees, and covered with herbs and blossoms which embalmed the air with the sweetest odours, and added to the luxury of the charming scene. Many spots were en-

riched by shady groves, and many enlivened with lillies, roses, gilly-flowers, and jessamines, and a thousand other flowers, joined to the finest and most aromatic violets in the world. My servant, who is far a better botanist than myself, presented to my notice several herbs made use of by the wise men of his nation. I knew one to be the *eustracia*, which, by being soaked in warm water and applied moist to the eye, restores a weak sight, or stops the fountain of the worst cataract. The next was that extraordinary herb called the *excursoncra*, which is an antidote against all sorts of poison, and a remedy for the bite of the worst vipers. It is also said to be serviceable in the yellow fever; in fits, paroxysms and vapours, and capable of dispelling gloom and melancholy. There was also another vegetable whose flower was very beautiful, and which the Indians used in all cases of fever and flux. The same exists in Portugal, and is known by the name of *anagris*.

Birds of every description, plumage, and song, were met with. Quail and partridge held the vicinity of cultivated grounds; pheasants and black cocks abounded in the deepest woods, and the blue linnet, red bird, purple finch, and hundreds of such others, claimed the protection of smaller detached bouquets and rural bowers.

On the approach of evening, I chose for my encampment one of those favoured spots which nature had exerted herself to adorn. It was the bank of a small stream finely wooded, interspersed with shrubs and flowers, and resorted to by many birds, which gave life and harmony to the embellished scene. The rapid little creek forced its way through the rocky channel beneath, and the trees that overhung the stream exhibited an assemblage truly picturesque. On such a spot I encamped with my faithful follower, and soon prepared a supper out of the fortune of the day. I had killed a very fine black cock, and several quails. The flesh of the black cock was of the most exquisite relish. This bird is known in the highlands of Scotland. He is not commonly found in so southern a latitude as this. In the winter of 1788, these birds were taken plentifully about Quebec. Whenever the winter of the arctic region sets in with rain, so as to cover the branches and leaves of trees with a glaze of ice, they are deprived of their food, and obliged to fly to a milder climate. They differ much from those of Europe in colour, the feathers being mostly white, and a coronet of a dark grey displayed on the head.

After the repast, I began to prepare for the night. To

prevent the robberies frequently perpetrated in Kentuckey, I charged my rifle and pistols, and placed a *couteau de chasse* where I intended laying my head. My next care was to guard against wild cats, wolves and panthers; and above all, against my most hated enemy, the crawling and deadly snake. In all my wandering they have cost me the greatest portion of pain and uneasiness; and I have never encamped but when my friend Cuff has led my mind to the contemplation, by relating stories of serpents sufficient to appal the stoutest heart. We called to recollection at least forty different species which infest these countries.

On taking every precaution which fear could suggest against such a host of enemies, I at length lay down, and from excessive fatigue, passed a night of the most tranquil and undisturbed repose. I was waked in the morning before the sun-rise by an extraordinarily fine mocking bird. He began by natural notes, musical and solemn, and then assumed the tones of numerous other animals, whether quadrupeds or birds. He seemed to divert himself alternately with alluring or terrifying other birds, and to sport with their hopes and fears. Sometimes he enticed them with the call of their mates, and on their approach terrified them with the screams of the eagle, or some other bird of prey. After this, he again took up his own native melody, and rising to the top of the highest tree, poured forth the sweetest and most various strains that imagination could conceive, and more than any other creature is endowed with the faculty to perform. This enchanting bird continued while I prepared and sat at my breakfast, and I heard his notes long after I left the place of his rest.

The remainder of my ride to Beardstown was highly interesting. It lay through an enchanting vale, in many places cultivated to the summit of the hills that formed it, and in all others covered with luxuriant timber and aromatic plants and shrubs. The vale is twenty miles in length, and fifteen in breadth; and as the splendid productions of nature, with which it abounds, are mingled with neat farm-houses, and settlements of considerable improvement, I know of no place that can vie with it for richness of scenery and rural perfection. No doubt, this vale and one other nearly similar to it, have been the cause of the extraordinary and extravagant reports which have been so industriously circulated in favour of Kentuckey. The authors of such reports, filled with enthusiasm by the abundant beauties of such spots, lost sight of the general deformity of the

country, and led the world astray by publishing the impressions made on them by a local and particular place.

Having conversed with a planter of some civilization and intelligence, I learned that the vale had been the favourite residence of a nation of Indians, called from tradition, Pono Cognorago, or the Vale of Spirits—which bears an exact analogy to our Garden of Eden, or Paradise, such places as have been deigned worthy the care and the walks of God.

Beardstown is situated on the southern verge of the Vale of Spirits, and where the ground is diversified by easy risings, and enriched with noble forests and improved land, abounding in domestic cattle, and all manner of wild game; the prodigality of the inhabitants not as yet having been equal to the accomplishment of its ruin. The town consists of about fifty houses, frame, log, and brick, and derives much of its consequence from receiving the road through it which leads from the eastern states, through Pittsburg, Chilicothé, and Lexington, to New Orleans, and stations on the Mexican Gulph: a route of about eighteen hundred miles, for the most part over mountains, and through swamps and wildernesses; but which have now small taverns placed at convenient distances through its whole length. It is also the great post road to Tenessee, Georgia, and the Carolinas. Its market is extraordinarily cheap, as may be judged from the terms of board and lodging, being but from a dollar to a dollar and a half per week. Of the inhabitants I have already said enough to make humanity shudder. They trample on all the advantages spread before them by nature, and live in a brutal ignorance of the charms and luxuries which surround them.

The principal part of the produce of the country about Beardstown is conveyed to the Ohio by means of the Green River, which rises near the head of Salt River, and pursuing a westerly course, empties itself into the Ohio, about fifty miles above the Wabash River. To the S. E. lie the Great Barrens—several million of acres, of no utility to man or beast, being entirely destitute of water. To the west, a considerable way, flow the two great rivers called Cumberland and Tenessee.

The whole country, as far as has been explored, is found to lie on a bed of limestone, which generally lies six feet below the surface, except in valleys where the soil is much thinner.

I remained but one night at Beardstown. The following day I returned here by a different direction, but met with nothing to be described without a dull tautology.

LETTER XXX.

Jefferson's Town and Canal—Clarksville—General View of the River Two Hundred and Seventy-two Miles down —Henderson's Town—Diamond Island.

Mouth of the Wabash, Indiana Territory, September, 1806.

PREVIOUSLY to leaving Louisville, I crossed the river and visited the town of Jefferson, which is also seated about two miles above the falls. It is yet very small, but the inhabitants appear determined to add to its character and opulence, being now employed in forming a canal, by which navigators may avoid all dangers, and proceed down the river at all seasons of the year. I surveyed the line of the canal, and think it much more practicable than that marked off on the opposite shore. I entertain no doubt of the commerce of the river being adequate to the support of both undertakings, and that the proprietors will be hereafter amply remunerated.

I descended the falls by the shore, and once more enjoyed their grandeur, though from a different point of view. I then crossed over to my boat which lay at Clarksville, a small settlement lying near the eddy formed by the recoiling flood. It is as yet a village of no importance, however, if it form the mouth of the intended canal its rise is certain. Twenty-five miles from Louisville I passed the mouth of Salt River, on the Kentuckey shore. All I could learn respecting it, was, that it received its name from the number of salines on its banks, which impregnate its waters when in a low state, and fifty seven miles farther down I put into Blue River, on the Indiana side, which takes its name from its colour being a fine azure.

In the whole run to the Wabash, of two hundred and seventy-two miles, effected in six days, and I made little or no stop, and met with no event to be called interesting; I very strongly perceived that occurrences capable of affording information and anecdote were ceasing. Above the falls,

the banks of the river are enlivened by plantations, towns, and villages; below, nothing is seen but the state of nature, broken at vast distances, of from twenty to thirty miles, with wretched huts, the residence of solitude and misfortune. Most of the settlers on the lower parts of the waters are criminals, who either escaped from or were apprehensive of public justice. On descending the river they fix on some inviting spot, without ever looking after the proprietor of the soil, erect a log-hut, plant a little corn, make salt at a neighbouring saline; coffee from the wild pea; and extract sugar from the maple tree. In time they extend their labours, and embrace all the necessaries of life. Some do more—from living in habits of industry they lose the practice of vice, and learn the consequence of virtue; while unhappily some other pursue their former crimes, and live by the means of murder and the plunder of various boats.

The aspect and banks of the river in the late run I have made, are nearly similar to those above the falls, and from below Pittsburg. The banks are formed of a chain of mountains; some rising up and above the rest; and some are so low, interwoven and contrasted, that they form an agreeable diversity of hills and dales. From several points of view the opposite bank looks like an immense amphitheatre, which has all the charms that can be produced by an infinite variety of the most sumptuous trees and shrubs, reflecting uncommon beauties on each other, and on the bosom of their favourite flood. Twenty miles below Blue River I crossed the mouth of another river on the same side. I believe it has not been named. The navigation of the three last rivers I have mentioned is very trifling. Their waters are low, and broken by rocks and rapids.

About ninety miles below the Blue River, and eight hundred and thirty-nine from Pittsburg, is Yellow-bank creek; so called from the banks changing their general colour and quality of a black mould to a bright yellow clay. In the space of eight miles below this creek, I passed a chain of islands six in number, which added much to the effect and beauty of the water, and gave more variety to the general scene. The islands were richly wooded, as are all others on the river. Between a creek called Hacden's and the Yellow-bank, which maintains its colour for the distance of a mile, the low lands commence. The high hills, which up the river are uniformly to be met with, now entirely disappear, and there is nothing to be seen on either hand but an extensive level

country. It is remarkable, that the hills should subside on each shore exactly at equal distances down, and in a similar distinction and manner twenty-five miles from the Yellow-bank. I crossed the mouth of Green River on the Kentuckey shore. It is the fine water which I mentioned in my last. It is navigated by bateaux at one season, and by flat-bottomed boats through the year. The lands are healthy, and inhabited by a stout race of people. Nearer the Ohio it is subject to inundation, is sickly, and thinly settled. Lower down, twenty-five miles more, I came to a place called the Red-bank, in consequence of its varying from the general colour, and assuming a deep red. I could not learn that any mineral or any ore had ever been discovered in the Red or Yellow Bank. This colour would encourage a belief that they contain something analogous to its distinction from that of the common and adjoining soil. The United States should order such appearances to be analized and explored. At the Red-bank, which is included in a grant by Congress to one Henderson, of two hundred thousand acres! a town is laid off. Owing to a remarkable bend in the river, though the distance from the mouth of Green River to Henderson, by water, is twenty-five miles, yet by land it is only about seven. Henderson consists of about twenty houses, and inhabited by a people whose doom is fixed. I never saw the same number of persons look so languid, emaciated, and sick. The whole settlement was attacked in the spring by the ague, which subsided in a nervous fever, and is now followed by a violent and wasting flux.

I left Henderson with the commiseration due to the sufferings of its inhabitants, and after a run of fifteen miles came in view of Diamond island, which is by far the finest in the river, and perhaps the most beautiful in the world. It is higher than the adjoining main land, containing twenty thousand acres; and is of the exact form of a diamond, whose angles point directly up and down, and to each side of the expanded river. The shades, views, and perspective of an island so situated, clothed with aromatic shrubs, crowned with timber, surrounded by water, bounded by an extensive and delightful country, are too numerous, varied, and sublime, to come under the controul of written description.

I visited the island in several directions, and found established on it a few French families, who live nearly in the original Indian state, and bestow very little labour on the

ground. They have planted a few peach orchards which thrive well, as do every other exotic introduced. Native grapes abound, and I tasted a wine expressed from them, which was as good as any inferior Bourdeaux. Fish are innumerable in the water, and swans, ducks, and geese reside eight months in the year around the island. It also abounds with game of every description, and is often visited by herds of deer, which swim from the main land to enjoy its fragrant herbage and luxuriant pasture.

The Wabash enters on the Indian or N. W. side. It is nine hundred and forty-nine miles from Pittsburg, and is one of the most considerable rivers between that town and the mouth of the Ohio. It is very beautiful, four hundred yards wide at its mouth, and three hundred at St. Vineconne's, which is one hundred miles above the mouth in a direct line. Within this space there are two small rapids which give very little obstruction to the navigation. In the spring and autumn it is passable for bateaux drawing three feet water; four hundred and twelve miles to Ouiatonan, a small French settlement on the west side of the river; and for large canoes it is navigable for one hundred and ninety-seven miles further, to the Miami carrying-place, which is nine miles from the Miami village. This village stands on Miami River, which empties into the S. W. part of Lake Eric. The communication between Detroit and the Illinois and Indiana country, is up Miami river to Miami village; thence, by land nine miles through a level country to the Wabash, and through the various branches of the Wabash to the respective places of distinction.

A silver mine has been discovered about twenty-eight miles above Ouiatonan, and salt-springs, lime, free-stone, blue, yellow, and white clay, are found in abundance on this river's banks.

LETTER XXXI.

Remarkable Cave—Vengeance of the Illinois on the Kentuckeyans—Wilson's Gang—Particular Description of the Cave—Hieroglyphics.

Cave in the Rock. Ohio Bank, Sept. 1806.

I HAD descended but twenty-two miles from the Wabash, when I came to on the Indiana shore to examine a very grand and interesting natural curiosity. It is a cave in a rock which presents itself to view a little above the water when high, and close to the bank of the river, and is darkened by the shade of some catalpa trees standing before the entrance, which adds much to the sublimity of its character. On each side the gently ascending copses of wood, and the extensive view of the water, profound, wide, and transparent, tend to render the cave an object truly delightful, and worthy of the most minute attention. I resolved to explore it, though it bore the reputation of being the residence of a band of robbers, who for many years have infested the river, but I find the cavern at first became an object of terror and astonishment from having been the retreat of the remains of an Indian nation exasperated against the Americans, and resolved to put as many of them as possible to death, to revenge the injuries and insults they and their friends had experienced from them since their coming into the country. It was a party of the Illinois who adopted this fatal resolution, and who carried it on for several years with the most bloody effect, till a large party of Kentuckeyans resolved to attack, and endeavour to exterminate them. With this intent fifty well armed men descended to the cave and attacked the Illinois, who were about double that number. Several fell on both sides, and the victory being doubtful till the Illinois, annoyed by the distance and length of the combat, rushed upon the enemy with lifted tomahawks, and horrid cries, and drove them to the mouth of the cave, into which they entered, and made a long and terrible resistance. In an instant the Illinois changed their mode: they cast up a heap of dry wood, reeds and cane, immediately before the entrance, which they undoubtedly guarded, and setting fire to the piles, suffocated all those

who had not resolution to rush through the flame, and brave death in another effort with their successful enemy. Some had vigour to make this desperate attempt. It was fruitless. The life of one man alone was spared. The rest perished by the fire, or fell under the hatchet. The man whose life was given him, was sent back to the government of Kentucky with this message: "Tell your wise men, that the Illinois have glutted their vengeance, and that their spirit is satisfied and appeased. On the borders of the lake we will bury the hatchet. Woe to those who make us take it from the ground." Soon after this act they departed, and reside to this time on the spot they mentioned for their intended retreat. The first who visited the cave witnessed a dreadful spectacle. The putrid bodies of the Americans were strewed all around; and as wolves, panthers, buzzards, and vultures, had made them their prey for several days, it must be difficult to form an idea of their mangled and terrible appearance. The remains were gathered together and buried under some sand at the far end of the cave, where they are frequently disturbed to gratify the curiosity of the river navigators.

About three years after this distinguished act of national and Indian vengeance, the cave became possessed by a party of Kentuckeyans, called "Wilson's gang." Wilson, in the first instance, brought his family to the cave, fitted it up as a spacious dwelling, and erected a sign post on the water side, on which were these words: "Wilson's liquor vault, and house for entertainment." The novelty of such a tavern induced almost all boats descending the river to call and stop for refreshment and amusement. Attracted by these circumstances, several idle characters took up their abode at the cave, after which it continually resounded with the shouts of the licentious, the clamour of riot, and the blasphemy of gamblers. Out of such customers as these, Wilson found no difficulty in forming a band of robbers, with whom he formed the plan of murdering the crews of every boat that stopped at his tavern, and send the boats manned by some of his party to New Orleans, and there sell their lading for cash, which was to be conveyed to the cave by land through the states of Tenessee and Kentucky; the party returning with it being instructed to murder and rob on all good occasions presented by the road. After a lapse of some time the merchants of the upper country began to be alarmed on finding their property make no return, and that their people never came back. Several families

and respectable men who had gone down the river were never more heard of, and the losses became so frequent, that it raised at length a cry of individual and general distress. This naturally led to inquiry, and large rewards were offered for the discovery of the perpetrators of such unparalleled crimes. It soon came out that Wilson with an organized party of forty-five men, was the cause of such waste of blood and treasure; that he had a station at Hurricane Island to arrest boats that passed by the mouth of the cavern, and that he had agents at the Natchiz and New Orleans, of presumed respectability, who converted his assignments into cash, though they knew the goods to be stolen, or obtained by the commission of murder! The publicity of Wilson's transactions soon broke up his party; some dispersed, others were taken prisoners, and he himself was killed by one of his associates, who was tempted by the original reward offered for the head of the captain of the gang.

These facts, which I had heard before, came direct to my memory on my arrival at the cave, and I confess to you, that I hesitated some moments before I resolved to explore it. My men had already heard accounts of the cavern which made them tremble, and recommended me strongly to depart, for fear of any dreadful accident. I was not to be turned from my purpose. I ordered light and arms, and entered the gloomy and spacious fabric of nature. After meditating a few moments on the general outline and grandeur of the scene, I descended to particulars, and found the cave to measure two hundred feet long, and forty feet high, the entrance forming a semicircular arch of ninety feet at its base, and forty-five in its perpendicular. The interior walls are smooth rock stained by fire, and marked with names of persons and dates, and other remarks, etched by former inhabitants, and nearly by every visitor. The floor is very remarkable; it is level through the whole length of its centre, and rises to the sides in stone grades, in the manner of seats in the pit of a theatre. On a diligent scrutiny of the walls, I could plainly discern that the Indians, at a very remote period, made use of the cave as a house of deliberation and council. The walls bear many hieroglyphics, well executed in the Indian manner; and some of them represented animals which bear no resemblance to any I have ever heard of or seen. While occupied in this research, I discovered an orifice in the roof of the cave, which appeared to work up a funnel to the surface of

the earth. It was as large as an ordinary chimney, and placed directly in the centre of the roof. The access was very difficult, and yet an increase of curiosity determined me to find out whither the passage led. In consequence I ordered a long hickery to be cut down, to be notched for the feet, and reared up against the mouth of the opening. My men seemed to think the passage might lead to the lurking-place of a banditti. They were much alarmed, and used every persuasion to turn me from my design. It was to no purpose. With a dirk in my breast, and a pair of pistols in my girdle, I mounted by means of the tree, and received a light from my servant, who insisted on following me, while Cuff remained as a centinel below, ready to fire a signal on any person's approach. With much difficulty I strained through the aperture, which appeared to form a perpendicular passage of fourteen feet; and to my great astonishment arrived in an apartment of greater magnitude than that from which I had immediately ascended, and of infinitely more splendour, magnificence, and variety. It expanded on all sides of the orifice through which I mounted, and at first gave no determinate ideas. The mind, on the contrary, was confused and stupified by so vague and incomprehensible a scene of gloom, diversity, and vastness. As I advanced, by the assistance of the lights, I began to discover the outlines of a large vault of great height and proportionate extent. The roof, which was arched, the sides and natural pillars that supported it, seemed at first sight to be cut out and wrought into innumerable figures and ornaments, not unlike those of a gothic cathedral. These were formed by a thousand perpetual distillations of the coldest and most petrifying quality imaginable, and which besides exhibited an infinite number of objects that bore some imperfect resemblance to many different kinds of animals. At the farther end of this large vault was an opening, which served as a descent to another vault of very great depth, as I judged from a stone cast in, whose reverberation was not returned for the space of several seconds. The descent was too rapid to be practicable, and can never be attempted but by some rash adventurer, careless whether he survives or perishes. While contemplating the frightful chasm, my servant approached me with some agitation, and recommended me to descend. On demanding the cause, he conducted me to a part of the cave he had been examining, and there I had the horror to discover the objects of his apprehension; they consisted of human bones,

some in a promiscuous heap, and some forming a complete skeleton. These were the skeletons of very recent subjects; and five others, by their difference in preservation, appeared to belong to a very remote period. Two of the skulls were beaten in, and several bones were fractured and broken, from which I inferred that murder had been committed, and that the dreadful reports respecting the cave were neither fabulous nor exaggerated. I met with a number of other fragments of skeletons, and some bones of deer and other animals, from which I presume that the banditti who infested the river sometimes dwelt in the upper as well as in the lower cave, and that most of their victims were immolated therein to save appearances and avoid detection. From the remains, it would appear that upwards of sixty persons must have perished in the cave, either by the hand of the assassin or from want, as it is possible that some unfortunate beings might have taken shelter there from pursuit, and not been able to extricate themselves again from the labyrinth; for with the assistance of light, of which the persecuted could not have been prepared, I found it extremely difficult to find the aperture which I entered. Perhaps half an hour was occupied in the painful search. I fired a pistol off, which I knew would bring my faithful Mandanean to our relief, but I did not know that its effect would be terrific and its report tremendous. The operation was too rapid to submit to description, and the facts too glaring to invite belief. No thunder could exceed the explosion, no echo return so strong a voice. My man fell as insensible at my feet, and I staggered several paces before I could recover my equilibrium. The light extinguished; the echo of the shot again rebounded "through the long sounding aisle and fretted vault," and all the demons of the place awoke at once to appal and confound me. Owls screamed in their retreats, bats fluttered through the air, and a direful contention of sounds and cries vied with each other to scare the heart, and fill the soul with horror and dismay. Before the tumult ceased, I discovered beams of light issuing from the lower cave, and in a moment after appeared my trusty Indian rising through the orifice with a torch in one hand and a sabre in the other, and exclaiming, *okima, okima sanguitehé*; "my chief, my chief, have a strong heart." The fears which had been fastening upon me instantly fell off, and I had composure to contemplate a subject for a sombre picture too grand and various to be expressed by human art. The gloom visibly receded from the rising light; the columns dis-

played their ponderous magnitude ; the roof exhibited its ample dome, and the whole glittered with distillations, like the firmament when studded with stars, and embellished with falling meteors. We found here, to my astonishment, abundance of shells, principally of the muscle kind. They were all open, and lay scattered on the floor and shelving sides of the cave, in a manner that fully convinced me they were there originally concreted and inhabited by fish, at a period when the place in which I found them was a sub-marine vault. From this fact it would appear that this country lay for ages under a flood, and that the waters retired from it from other causes than those ascribed to the general and universal deluge, which we are instructed to believe rose and retreated in a space and manner that entirely checked every other proceeding of nature, and made an awful pause in her operation and works. That the shells were introduced into the cave by a rising deluge, or by man, to live on their contents, is completely inadmissible from what I have already observed respecting the situations in which they are found, and the certain character, method and number they exhibit through the whole place. Surely this fact is worth the future speculations of the learned.

At the instant of a disposition to descend to the lower apartment of the rock, and to the light of heaven which I ardently longed to see, a persisting curiosity led me to visit a recess in the side of the cave, the opening to which was so low that I had to stoop considerably, and advance with care, to avoid the rugged walls of the passage, and the roof hung with cristallizations, as pointed and bright as the most polished spear.

I had advanced, however, but a few steps when the scene changed : I entered an apartment of an indefinite space of gloom. No pillars supported the dome ; no crystal stars illumined the dismal firmament. It was a black domain, a dead-like asylum. I might have contemplated the forbidding scene sometime longer, had I not been warned to collect my thoughts and employ them quickly against an approaching danger. My torch grew dim, a smell of sulphur affected my senses, the air of the place became inflammable, the expanse instantaneously lighted up, and hell and all its fire and furies, satellites and inhabitants, suddenly burst on and around me. I made but one spring to the passage through which I entered, and escaped through it mangled and bruised. Notwithstanding the impression of danger which remained on my mind, I could not resist looking back on the orifice

from which I emerged; the lightning broke through it with such inconceivable rapidity and eclat, that, expecting to hear the crack and rattle of thunder every instant, I ordered my people to follow me, and descended to the lower cave with the precipitation of a coward.

An apprehension that the rock and caverns would explode, induced us to retire to some distance: that idle fear soon wore off, and I returned to the cave to examine its walls and trace out some of its hieroglyphics.

I have, before this day, remarked an existing analogy in Indian and Grecian customs and practices; and it remains for me to give you a more ample and certain proof of a direct affinity and strong resemblance.

The hieroglyphics of the cave consist of—the sun in different stages of rise and declension; the moon under various phases; a snake, representing an orb, biting his tail; a viper; a vulture; buzzards tearing out the bowels of a prostrate man; a panther held by the ears by a child; a crocodile, several trees and shrubs, a fox, a curious kind of hydra serpent, two doves, many bears, several scorpions, an eagle, an owl, some quails, eight representations of animals which are now unknown, but whose former existence I before asserted, from the character and number of bones I have already described to have been found. Three out of the eight are like the elephant in all respects except the tusk and tail. Two more resemble the tyger, one a wild boar, another a sloth, and the last appears a creature of fancy, being a quadrumane instead of a quadrupede; the claws being alike, and in the act of conveying something to the mouth, which lay in the centre of the monster; and several fine representations of men and women, not naked, but clothed in a manner which bespoke, in the Indian, much of the costume of Greece and Rome.

You must at once perceive, that a person of the meanest judgment and most confined reading, is compelled to allow that these objects, with an exception or two, were employed by the Greeks to display the nature of the world, the omnipotence of God, the attributes of man, and the utility of rendering his knowledge immortal and systematic. Suppose we enter into a short inquiry of the science of conveying instruction from several kinds of hieroglyphics drawn from the works of nature and the dispositions of living animals. It may be interesting, and cannot be entirely irrelevant to our subject.

All human sciences flourished among the Egyptians long before they were common to any other people.

The Grecians, in the days of Solon, Pythagoras, Herodotus, and Plato, acquired in Egypt all that knowledge of nature which rendered them so eminent and remarkable. But the Egyptian priests did not divulge their doctrines without the aid of signs and figurative emblems. Their manner was to discover to their auditors the mysteries of God and of Nature in hieroglyphics, which were certain visible shapes and forms of creatures, whose inclinations and dispositions led to the knowledge of the truths intended for instruction. All their divinity, philosophy, and their greatest secrets, were comprehended in these ingenious characters, for fear they should be profaned by a familiar acquaintance with the commonality. The learned of antiquity seem not willing to make them share in any part of the profound sciences; therefore Alexander was displeased at Aristotle for publishing in a vulgar language, some of his treatises which contained an account of the curiosities of nature.

I shall now proceed to shew you that the same knowledge of hieroglyphics flourished in America for the same design, and with as much ingenuity and art.

It requires but a rapid and cursory view of the hieroglyphics above enumerated, to convince you of their intention, and also that the vault wherein they are found engraven, was originally a place of worship and sanctuary of Indian priests. I make a brief review.

1. The sun, the most glorious of all visible beings, represented their chief God, and received their adoration for causing all the fruits of their earth to bring forth their increase.

2. The moon denoted the next most beautiful object in the creation, and was worshipped for her own peculiar usefulness, and more particularly for supplying the place of the departed sun.

3. The snake, in the form of an orb, biting his tail, pointed out the continual mutation of creatures, and the change of one being into another; or it represented the perpetual motion of the world itself. If so, this construing agrees with the Greek figure of the same kind, which implies that the world feeds upon itself, and receives from itself in return, a continual supply for renovation and nourishment. Claudian was acquainted with this hieroglyphic, which he beautifully describes:

"Perpetuumque virens squammis caudamque reducto
"Ore vorans, tacito relegens exordia."

Perhaps the same symbol designated the year, which revolves round and ends where it at first began. I believe the ancients gave it this import or meaning.

4. The viper, the most venomous of all creatures, was the emblem of the devil, or wicked angel; for, as its poison is quick and powerful, so is the destroying spirit in bringing on mankind evils which can only be opposed by the grace and power of God.

5. The vulture; I am at a loss to give this hieroglyphic a just interpretation. I am persuaded it will bear the one given it by the Greeks, who made it express nature.

6. The buzzard's tearing out the bowels of a prostrate man, seems a moral intending to reprove fierceness and cruelty, and to inculcate compassion and peace.

7. The panther held by the ears by a child, was meant to impress a sense of the dominion of innocence and virtue over oppression and vice, or perhaps it bore the Greek meaning of a wretch encompassed with difficulties which he vainly attempts to avoid.

8. The crocodile, from its power and might, was another symbol of the Great Spirit; or its being the only creature without a tongue, might have given it a title to the same honour, as all Indian nations concur in representing their God, beholding and doing all things in heaven and earth in a profound silence.

9. The several trees and shrubs were undoubtedly emblematical of particular virtues, or represented in the temple from a veneration for their aromatic and healing properties. Among the ancients, we know that the palm and the laurel were emblems of victory and deserved honour; the myrtle, of pleasure; the cedar, of eternity; the oak, of strength; the olive-tree, of fruitfulness; the vine, of delight and joy; and the lilly, of beauty, &c. But what those in the cave imply, it is not possible to determine, as nothing of their character can be deduced from the manner they were sketched on the surface of a rough wall, where the design is obscured by smoke, or nearly obliterated from the effect of damp and the gradual decay of time.

10. The fox, from every authority, was put to denote subtilty and craftiness. Even now, an entire nation, goes by the name of the Fox Nation, a title their ancestors assumed at a remote period, when they subdued their enemies more by the use of cunning and art, than by the force of combat or dint of arms.

11. The hydra serpent possibly signified malice and envy:

passions which the hieroglyphic taught mankind to avoid; or it may have implied an unsatisfied desire and thirst which nothing could assuage, and which ought never to be suffered to reside in the human breast. It may bear some other signification also, which I have not divination to find out.

12. The two doves were hieroglyphic of continency, and were represented to recommend chastity, and mutual and conjugal love. All nations agree in this, and admire the attachment of doves, and their extreme effection for each other. They might also convey a moral to suppress choler, the dove having none; and to impose a love of meekness and good temper in the mind of man.

13. The bears. There is a difficulty in ascertaining the intent of this hieroglyphic. I apprehend it means to imply labour and assiduity, as an Indian opinion prevails, that the cubs come into the world in mishapen parts, and that their eyes, ears, and other members are licked into form by the mother, who passes several days in that anxious and unceasing employ: therefore they may have been considered the emblem of labour, which gives beauty and perfection in return for perseverance and toil.

14. The scorpions were calculated to inspire a detestation for malignity and vice. The present race of Indians hold these animals in great disgust. They are well acquainted with their fierce and venomous nature, and heal wounds inflicted by them by a preparation of their own blood. They might from this circumstance embrace considerable meaning in their hieroglyphic, and more than I here note.

15. The eagle was represented, and is held to this day, as the emblem of a great, noble, and liberal mind. When the Indians speak of a warrior who soars above the multitude in person and endowments, they say, "he is like the eagle, who destroys his enemies and gives protection and abundance to the weak of his own tribe."

16. The owl must have been set up to deter men from deceit and hypocrisy. He cannot endure the light of the sun, nor can hypocrites bear that of truth and sincerity. He may have been the emblem of death and wretchedness, as among the Egyptians, or of victory and prosperity, when in a flying attitude, as among the Greeks: I conceive my first conclusion, however, to be the most admissible.

17. The quails afford no clue to their hieroglyphic. Probably they denoted the corn season, and pointed out the time for the usage of some particular rites and ceremonies. With the Greeks they were emblematical of impiety, from a

belief that they enrage and torment themselves when the crescent of the new moon first appears.

18. The representations of the large animals were indicative of the power and attributes of the Great Spirit. The mammoth might have been emblematical of his greatness, justice, resolution, and mercy; the tyger of his strength, authority, and capacity of inflicting injuries; the wild boar of his wrath and vengeance; the sloth of his patience and forbearance, and the non-descript figure of his hidden virtues, which they knew themselves incapable to find out.

19. The human figures give a wider range for conjecture than any of the other objects I have named. The men may represent chiefs, princes, or warriors, who had made themselves eminent in the government, in the council, or in the field; or who had manifested that bravery of disposition, which contemns the difficulties of the world and sets the disgraces of fortune at defiance. One fact, however, results from the costume of the figures, which is of great interest and moment. The dress resembles the Roman, and the figures would be taken for European antiques, were it not for the character and manner of the heads, which resemble those of the Indians of the present time. The dress consists of—1. A carbasus, or rich cloak. 2. A sabucula, or waistcoat, or shirt. 3. A supparum, or breeches open at the knees. 4. Solea, or sandals tied across the toes and heels. 5. The head embraced by a bandeau and crowned with high feathers.

20. What the females were meant to represent, is as dubious as that of the men; the head dresses have a Grecian cast; the hair encircling the crown and confined by a bodkin. The remaining costume is Roman. 1. The garment called stola, or perhaps the toga pura, flowed from the shoulders to the ground. 2. An indusium appeared underneath. 3. The indusium was confined under the breast by a zona or cestus. And 4. sandals in the manner of those of the men.

I fear not then to declare my mind and again to assert, that the Indians possessed habits and manners similar to other nations of antiquity. In common they were the unsophisticated children of nature. In common they adopted the religion of nature, which is nothing more than the acknowledgment of God in his works, and worshipping those objects to which he is pleased to impart the most manifest degree of his character and power. It is not the individual thing itself that is adored, but the attribute of the Supreme Being, which its dispositions and capacity figuratively unfolds.

The similitude in Indian and Grecian hieroglyphic is too natural to require authority to account for it. All nations have made use of this species of science, and nearly for the same purpose, and after the same manner. There are several nations distant from each other on the continent of Asia, whose languages are as different as the Greek and Hebrew, and yet they understand the writings of one another, which cannot be but by certain hieroglyphics, or universal characters, representing the shapes of things known to men of all nations, and of all tongues. Therefore the hieroglyphics of the Americans not only agree with those of ancient Europe, but bear a vast resemblance to the symbols made use of by Asian, African, and South-Sea tribes. I shall illustrate this subject for you by an historical fact, which proves the existence of hieroglyphics in America upwards of one hundred years back; and shews how they were employed in the place of written characters—as in former Egypt, Greece, &c.

Soon after Canada was invaded by the French, the Iroquois, with whom they had many combats of various success, etched the following characters on a plane-tree plank, after the decision of an engagement, and sent it in the nature of a dispatch to their different and distant tribes.

1. The arms of France and a hatchet erect above them. The hatchet being the symbol of war, shewed that the French had taken it from the ground and declared vengeance against them. Round this figure were eighteen characters, each representing the number of ten, which implied that the French were one hundred and eighty strong.

2. In a line underneath are designated, a bird in the act of springing from the top of a mountain, which was well depicted. The mountain denoted Montreal, and the bird, that it was the place from which the Indians took their departure.

3. On the same line are seen a deer with a moon expressed on his back, shewing that they started on the first quarter of the moon in the month of July, called by them the Deer's month.

4. Under this is a canoe and twenty-one dots, which imply that they travelled by water one and twenty days.

5. On another line is a man's foot and seven dots, shewing that they marched by land seven days.

6. These are succeeded by a hand and three cabins, to note that they had arrived within three days' journey of the village of the Isonontouans, which is expressed on the same line by a cabin with a tree at each end, which is the people of that tribe; and the sun is represented at the east end of the

cabin, to mark the direction on which they arrived at the village.

7. On another line the arms of the same people are exhibited together, with twelve marks of the figure of ten, and a man extended in the act of sleeping, which proves that the village contained one hundred and twenty warriors who were taken by surprise, as appears from the man in a recumbent posture, and deprived by sleep of his vigilance and senses.

8. Then follows a tomahawk and eleven heads, to testify that eleven were killed; and on the same line are five men standing on a figure representing ten, indicating that fifty were taken prisoners.

9. In the space of a bow are nine heads, meaning that nine of the aggressors of the vanquished party were put to death, and on the same line are twelve marks, to shew that that number were wounded.

10. On a separate space are two flights of arrows opposed to each other in the air, which express that both parties fought with vigour, and met with powerful resistance.

11. The dispatch closes with a flight of arrows all in one direction, to make known that the enemy were at length put to flight, or beat in disorder and confusion.

12. Recapitulation. One hundred and eighty Iroquois left Montreal the first quarter of the moon in the month of July, and navigated one and twenty days: after which they travelled ten days, and surprised one hundred and twenty Isonontouans; eleven of whom lost their lives in battle, fifty were taken prisoners, nine were put to death as principals, twelve were wounded, and the combat was fought with courage on both sides.

From the length of my communications from this celebrated place, and the extent, of what will probably be called, my idle speculations, you will understand that I got familiarized to the horrors of the vault, to which I have to add that I took up my abode in it. The fact is, I thought but right to unload and overhawl my boat before I reached the Mississippi, and where could I be better accommodated, during that process, than in the cave, where I had abundant space for my baggage, and ample amusement for my leisure hours? The apprehensions which first seized me soon wore off, though I cannot say my first night's lodging in the rock was altogether sound and free from restraint: we held an alternate watch every two hours, and kept up large fires to preserve ourselves from reptiles and beasts. Nor can I say that we were comfortable; the place was too immense, and too

much connected with tragical events, to allow the mind to sink into indifference, or to relax into that disengaged state which alone is favourable to comfort and tranquil happiness. The days past more equal and serene. In the morning I fish for my breakfast; before dinner I amuse myself in a ramble with my gun, and the evening is devoted to writing, and visiting the works of my servants.

I must not leave this without giving you an opportunity of participating a pleasure of a very grateful nature which this desolate place has but just now afforded me.

I descended the river this morning (Sunday) about a mile, to explore a spot which presented indications of lead ore. I succeeded in discovering a very fine vein, and was returning with a specimen, when my steps and attention were arrested by the sudden and extraordinary sound of church-music at one time swelling in the breeze, and at another dying on the stream. I stood in the attitude of one doubting the existence of a fact, and falling into the belief of génie and enchanted ground. It was a mystery I could by no means solve, and I advanced agitated with contending ideas of supernatural agency, and of the moral and ordinary laws of the world, which deny encouragement to absurdity and certain impossibilities. As I approached, the sound designed an anthem, swelled to a great pitch by numerous voices. Filled with awe and reverence, I hastened to the mouth of the cave whence the divine melody issued, and entered it at the moment that a devout multitude were casting themselves on their knees, and supplicating for the mercy and protection of a great and benevolent Providence. Without wasting a time so precious in frigid speculations of so sublime a spectacle, I followed the bright example; nay more, I prostrated myself in the dust, poured out an effusion of praise to God, and implored him aloud to accept in this splendid tabernacle built by his own hands, the only tribute I had to offer, not the words from my lips, but the blood which emotion ejaculated from my heart, and the tears which gratitude impelled from my eyes. Hurried away by fervid and holy passions, I never perceived that my instantaneous worship had no relation to the general service of the place. The congregation indulged me in so sacred an error. They were silent, and remained so till I recovered serenity, and cast off my surprise. They then continued, and finally concluded their devotion with an excellent prayer, and sound though simple discourse. I have to tell you, that the congregation which caused me so much astonishment and

reverential delight, was composed of about forty religious families, who have lately formed a settlement a few miles back, and who have chosen the cave as their place of worship. I had known nothing of this, therefore my delusion was at once grand and enthusiastic. On casting my eye over what I have just written, I find I have given you a very faint idea of the impression made on me on first hearing the sacred hymn. At times the sounds were wafted in their full quire of melody to the ear, and again, melting like the notes of the Eolian harp, they reached it in tremulous, and almost imperceptible vibration. There was a transport in the mysterious and simple music, of which I did not conceive myself susceptible. It touched the most sympathetic chord of my heart, and awakened recollection the most sublime and beautiful.

LETTER XXXIII.

Hurricane Island—A violent Hurricane—Cumberland River—The Tenessee State—Its Produce, Commerce, &c.—Indian Tribes—Tenessee River—The Whirl—Shawanee Village, an Indian Settlement—Its Inhabitants—Interesting Characteristics and Habits—Indian Gallantries—Song of Logan—Shawanee Practice of Physic—Jugglers—Various Customs—Marriage and Divorce—Other Habits and Traits of the Shawanee Character.

Shawanee Village, River Ohio, Sept. 1806.

I HAVE at length left the cave.

Three miles below is Hurricane Island, notorious for having been the place of residence of a party of Wilson's gang. It was chosen for that purpose from this circumstance: in consequence of the contraction of the river, the current runs with great force: I calculated at six miles an hour. The island is clothed with fine trees, and the opposite banks are level, and capable of high cultivation. But since I left the village of Henderson, I have not seen twenty settlements, and I understand the last three hundred miles have been little more than an uninterrupted wilderness. The river also is more dangerous than above. It abounds in sand bars, and is subject to violent and tempestuous winds.

On leaving the island I was struck by an hurricane, which came so unexpectedly that I had not time to pull in shore. It rushed up the river, and raised a sea in which all our art was required to preserve us from foundering. When the boat was first struck she backed against the body of the current, and remained a few moments in the situation of a ship that had missed her stays. The water began to bear her down. I clapt the helm about, and succeeded in putting her head *up stream*, whither she went with as much velocity as I ever knew her descend: My situation was still perilous, and was rendered more so by the storm which suddenly chopped round, and made it necessary for me again to put about in a dangerous channel, and amidst contending waves. This done, I made an effort to gain the windward shore, which I soon found a very rash attempt. The hurricane tore the trees up by the roots, or laid them prostrate with dreadful force in the water; the smallest touch of one of which would have sent my boat to the bottom. Hearing the tremendous noise of the falling woods, I had to keep the open river, bale out the water I had taken in, and keep steady in the suck of the current. When the storm abated, and the river fell, you can hardly conceive the elating effect it had on me. I profited by a gentle breeze, into which the tempest subsided, and ran without intermission for sixteen hours. That time brought me to the mouth of Cumberland river, into which I put to repair my damages.

Cumberland, or Shawanee river, intersects the boundary between Virginia and North Carolina, sixty miles from the Mississippi, and again one hundred and ninety-eight miles from the same river a little above the entrance of Obey's river into Cumberland. Its clear fork crosses the same boundary about three hundred miles from the Mississippi. Cumberland is a very gentle stream; navigable for loaded bateaux for eight hundred miles without interruption; then intervene some rapids of fifteen miles in length, after which it is again navigable for seventy miles upwards, which is within two miles of the great Cumberland mountains. It is about one hundred and twenty yards wide through its whole course. This river waters the country called Tenessee, lying to the south of Kentuckey, and has on its banks the principal towns of that state.

The Tenessee state bears a very high character. It is bounded north by Kentuckey and part of Virginia; east by North Carolina; south by South Carolina and Georgia; and west by the Mississippi. The climate is very tempe-

rate, and said not to be unhealthy. It is watered by seven navigable rivers, the Cumberland and Tenessee, which empty into the Ohio; and the Wolf, Hatchie, Deer, Obion, and Reelfoot, which empty into the Mississippi. The Cumberland, or great laurel ridge of mountains, is the most stupendous pile in the United States. It abounds with ginseng and physical plants, and contains sloan coal in a vast abundance.

A few years since Tenessee abounded with herds of wild cattle and buffaloes. Elk are still seen in some places, chiefly among the mountains. The deer are become comparatively scarce. Bears and wolves yet remain, beavers and otters are caught on the upper branches of all the rivers.

The mammoth, that stupendous animal, formerly inhabited the Tenessee: his remains are often found.

Very valuable articles are exported from the state. Fine waggon and saddle horses, beef, cattle, ginseng, deer skins and furs, cotton, hemp and flax; also iron, timber, pork, and flour.

The state government have very judiciously erected public schools and places of worship in the principal towns, and from all accounts the country is likely to prosper and flourish.

There are still two Indian tribes within and in the vicinity of the state: they are the Cherokees and Chickasaws. The Cherokees have been a warlike and numerous nation; but by continual wars in which they have been engaged with the northern Indian tribes, they are now reduced, and become dejected and pusillanimous.

The Chickasaws, of all the Indian tribes within the limits of the United States, merit the most from Americans, having at all times maintained a friendship towards them. They glory in saying that they never shed the blood of an Anglo-American. There is so great an affinity between the Chickasaw and the Choctaw language, that the people can converse together, each speaking his own dialect. They are a personable race of men, and have an openness in their countenance and behaviour uncommon among savages. These nations say, they are a remnant of a great nation that once lived far to the west, which was discharged by the Spaniards, for whom they still retain an hereditary hatred.

The banks of the Tenessee for more than two hundred miles up are nothing more than a wilderness; they are subject to inundation, which forms an atmosphere unfavourable to health. I had no temptation to tarry in such situation,

and dropped down to the mouth of the Tenessee river, which is but twelve miles to that of the Cumberland. Perhaps the world does not afford a similar fact, that of three rivers, one thousand miles each in length, and separated one thousand miles each at their source, conjoin within the space of a few miles.

The Tenessee river, called also the Cherokee's, is the largest tributary of the Ohio. It rises in the mountains of Virginia, and pursues a course of more than one thousand miles, south and south-west, receiving from both sides a number of large and navigable streams. It then turns to the north, in a circuitous course, and mingles with the Ohio about sixty miles from its mouth. From its entrance into the Ohio, to the muscle shoals, two hundred and fifty miles, its current is very gentle, and the river deep enough on all occasions for the largest row-boats. The muscle shoals are about twenty miles in length. At this place the river spreads to the width of three miles, forms a number of islands, and is of very difficult passage. From these shoals to the whirl or suck, the place where the river breaks through the great ridge of Cumberland mountains, is two hundred and fifty miles; the navigation all the way is excellent for boats of forty or fifty tons.

The whirlpool or whirl, as it is called, is reckoned a great curiosity. The river, which a few miles above is half a mile wide, is here compressed within one hundred yards. Just as it enters the mountain a large rock projects from the northern shore, in an oblique direction, which renders the bed of the river still narrower, and causes a sudden bend; the water of the river is of course thrown with great rapidity against the southern shore, whence it rebounds around the point of the rock, and produces the *whirl*, which is about eighty yards in circumference. Canoes have been often carried into the whirl, and escaped by the dexterity of the rowers without damage. But several boats not so readily worked, have been sucked in and lost beyond redemption, or vomited up in the wreck together with trees and stumps about a mile below. It is avoided by keeping close to the bank on the south side. There are but a few miles portage between a navigable branch of this river and the waters of the Mobile, which runs into the Gulph of Mexico. This river is subject to inundations. I quitted its mouth in haste to avoid vermin and putrid exhalations from ponds, swamps, and mud, exposed to the action of the sun, on the subsiding of the waters.

After leaving the Tenessee, a short day's run brought me abreast of the Shawanee village, mentioned in a former letter from the mouth of the Great Kenhaway. My boat was quickly surrounded by canoes, containing men, women, and children. The village, consisting of about thirty huts, stood in a beautiful bend of the river, and commanded a delightful view of great extent. I put to shore with a view of passing the night with the real proprietors of the soil of America. My determination gave the natives great satisfaction; many of them jumped into my boat, and worked her to land in a few minutes. Their behaviour was very orderly, even marked with studious propriety and correct manners. I was affected notwithstanding, to perceive that their only motive for approaching me was to beg or purchase whiskey. Finding that I had none, they went off to their different pursuits, and left me to my own meditations. I walked about the village unnoticed, and contemptated the scene before me without any kind of molestation. The evening was fine, the situation rural, and the inhabitants employed; their men in repairing canoes and fishing tackle, their women in preparing supper, and making mocasons, and the children in exercising their bows and arrows, and dancing in groups under the shadow of the neighbouring trees. All these occupations and amusements were carried on out of doors, and in a manner as simple and artificial as before the introduction of European wares. They remain to this day the same primitive people, and are in no measure altered, except in the vices they have acquired in trading with us, and a passion for drink which acknowledges no bounds or moderation. It would have been difficult to contemplate this ruin of the Shawanee nation, without contrasting their present with their former situation. A few years back they consisted of several thousand souls, and possessed an extent of territory of one hundred square miles. They were famous in battle, and often drove the Americans to the Alleghany hills. They were the first nation who raised the hatchet, and the last who buried it with bleeding reluctance in the ground. And what is now their history? The whole nation has passed away as the effusion of the snow. It has wasted down to about thirty families, who live on the bounty of their invaders, and on a spot of land limited to a certain extent. This melancholy fact leads to another reflection. Forty years ago it was ascertained that four million Indians inhabited the banks of the Ohio and her tributary streams. The sword, the small pox, and the poison of ardent spirits, have wasted them down to about two

thousand, who live in places allotted them by the states, and in habits between savage and civilized.

The men are tall and well made, and are endowed with considerable strength and agility. They, together with the women, are of a darker copper colour than I have hitherto seen. The women's faces are handsome, and their hands beautifully small, their eyes are large and black, the hair also black, their teeth as white as ivory, and their breath as pure as the air they imbibe. They do not appear as athletic as Europeans, but they possess great activity; are indefatigable in their pursuits, inured to hardship, and taught to brave all the severities of heat and cold, and every privation and inconvenience. The women wear their hair in a broad plait down to the small of the back, and never cut it on any account—whereas the men wear their's short, and cut it every month. Their dress consisted of but as much as is absolutely necessary for decency. In winter, the men add to this a blanket, and the women a kind of garment which descends below the knees, and is fastened round the waist by a girdle. Both sexes sit on the ground. The houses are constructed of logs, and have more of the American than the Indian taste. They keep out the elements, but are not comfortable or cleanly. The diet consists of roast and boiled meats, soups and fish of various sorts. I could not discover that they employed either salt or spices in their dishes. They are very healthy, and are exempt from many diseases afflicting those who use salt and spices immoderately. They are never troubled with the palsy, dropsy, gout, asthma, gravel, or stone. There were two men at least ninety years old among them. It is common for the old and infirm to retire from their tribe, and liberate life with their own hands.

The entire village supped together at the same time. The prelude to it was a dance of an hour. The dancers chaunting singly their own exploits, and jointly those of their ancestors. Those who did not dance sat round in a circle, and marked each cadence with a tone resembling hé hé hé. Immediately after supper, dancing was renewed, and continued till a late hour, with infinite festivity and good humour.

On descending to the river side after my evening's amusement, I was very agreeably surprised by some Indian boys playing on reeds at a distance. They were delightfully wild and harmonic, and plaintive to an affecting degree.

Nor was this music played in vain. It was for the purpose of seducing the young women out of the village, and

of giving their favourites an opportunity of telling their loves in the silence of the woods, or on the borders of the murmuring stream. On the subject of love no persons have been less understood than the Indians. It is said of them that they have no affection, and that the intercourse of the sexes is sustained by a brutal passion, remote from tenderness and sensibility. This is one of the many gross errors which have been propagated to calumniate these innocent people; and it has arisen from its being remarked by all observers, that no expressions of endearment or tenderness ever escape the Indian sexes towards each other. They have been always seen to maintain a rigid distance, and to be equally strangers to love and amity. But these observers ought to have known that such reserve is only practised in the day time, and that, in compliance with a political and religious law, which stigmatizes youth wasting their time in female dalliance, except when covered with the veil of night and beyond the prying eye of man. In consequence of this law, gallantry is strictly avoided during the day time. And were a young savage to tell his mistress before the sun was yet set, that he loved her better than he did its light, she would run from—or look upon him with disdain. For my part, I never saw gallantry conducted with much more mystery or refinement, than I did during my stay with the Shawanee nation.

I returned to the village, where I found all the fires put out, and every object under the shadow of night and mystery. I went to the tent of Adario, the chief of the tribe, with whom I had much previous conversation, and took him through the settlement to acquire some further knowledge of its interesting inhabitants. We had gone but a few steps when we perceived an Indian with a lighted calumet in his hand. I learned from Adario that he was going a *calumeting*; that is, a practice of gallantry among the Indians. To comprehend it well, you must know that as the savages have no distinction of property, superiority, or subordination, they live on a footing of equality, and without the fear of thieves or of enmity from one another. Consequently they leave their doors open day and night, and fear no interruption whatever. The lover takes advantage of this liberty; lights his calumet, enters the cabin of his mistress, and gently presents it to her. If she extinguishes it, she admits him to her arms; but if she suffers it to burn unnoticed he softly retires with a disappointed and throbbing heart, knowing, that while there was light she never could consent to his wishes.

That spirit of nocturnal amour and intrigue is attended with one dreadful practice: the girls drink the juice of a certain herb which prevents conception, and often renders them barren through life. They have recourse to this to avoid the shame of having a child; a circumstance in which alone the disgrace of their conduct consists, and which would be thought a thing so heinous, as to deprive them for ever from respect, and religious and marriage rites. The crime is in the discovery.

The day following I made some inquiries about Logan, a former chief of the Shawanee nation. He still lives in their memory, and they often sing his praise in a funeral song, the literal substance of which I have procured from Adario, but without any knowledge of its time or measure. You will be more pleased with it verbatim:

"This is the song of the mighty Logan; the conqueror of white men: the pride of his nation, and the beloved of the author of life. He was good, valourous, and warlike; the soul of his army, and the executor of vengeance. He was the light of our camps and villages. His hatchet was always raised up in their defence, and his bosom glowed with the love of his brethren.

"Logan, valiant and triumphant chieftain, may the Great Spirit, in whose defence you often warred, account with you in the land of souls, and give you a garden of beauty and harmony, and a pond of water like the moon in her full, on which the sun reflects his light, and round which the birds and beasts may delight to play!

"Young warriors of Logan's tribe, bear in view the honours he reaped when living, and the glorious recompense which awaits him dead! May the Great Spirit prosper his work, and never permit his enemies to be avenged of him! May his gardens flourish beyond their's, and may the fountain of his waters have flavour and brightness, when their's are putrid and dried up!

"Friends of Logan, mitigate your sorrow; remember his actions; improve by them; and let this song go down from child to child, to commemorate his virtues and his worth!"

I know nothing which merits more serious investigation than the Shawanee practice of physic.

Such disorders as are common among them they treat with infinite skill. I saw a subject who had neglected taking remedies for a venereal complaint, which had made such a ravage on parts of his body, that his flesh was falling to pieces, and yet he was in a fair way of recovery, by drinking repeated draughts of a decoction made from certain roots ca-

pable of effectually annihilating that dreadful distemper. The diet made use of in illness always consists in meat or fish-soup. The Shawanecse betray no fear of the loss of life from illness. They prefer death to a lingering sickness. When ill, their first object is to promote sleep and transpiration: if these fail, their friends visit and dance around them, or bring a priest and juggler, to endeavour to effect a cure, or to amuse the remains of life, if it refuses to be prolonged.

A juggler is a mixed character, representing a mamae, physician, and priest; or to speak more properly, he is a mountebank, who, having escaped a dangerous infirmity, supposes himself immortal, and professes to cure every species of disease by powers delegated to him by good and evil spirits. When in health, the Shawance laugh at the jugglers, and esteem them fools deprived of reason in paroxysm of some malady; but when they themselves are violently attacked, and find their own remedies ineffectual, they send for the jugglers, who dance, tell extraordinary stories, make horrid contortions and grimaces, leap, jump, and howl and roar, in the manner of wolves and other beasts of prey, in order to appear possessed and under the influence of supernatural operations. After this prelude a feast is ordered, of which the juggler and friends partake, without much feeling for the patient, who silently pines in the midst of their uproar and enjoyment.

After the repast, the sick man is carefully examined by the juggler, who exclaims aloud, "If the Evil Spirit be here, he is commanded by the Great Manitou to depart!" He then goes into a separate tent, dances, sings, and repeats the howls of the wolf, and returns to the sick, whose leg or arm he sucks, and casting from his mouth some substance he had previously put into it, says, "There! take courage, the Evil Spirit has lost his charm, you now can be cured!" On this, he gives the patient the juice of some plants, which act as purgatives or sudorifics. When the process was attended with success, the juggler was again feasted and treated with high distinction; but if it failed, and that the person died, it was a former practice to kill the physician on the spot, and send him to the shades with him whom he had murdered. This custom no longer prevails among the Shawanecse: they only banish the juggler for a time when the patient dies, to assuage the sorrow of his friends.

Purges and sweats caused by vegetable decoctions, are the favourite remedies for all Indian disorders.

The Shawanecse seldom pass ten days without enduring an

artificial sweat, whether they be in good or bad health, and in summer, when in the highest state of perspiration, they pitch themselves into the coldest water they can meet. I partook of their steam-bath, but dare not follow their example in jumping into the river till perfectly free from heat. The village has a public bath, in which six may perspire at a time. It is a hut, the floor of which is an oven heated from the outside with cedar, gum, and spice woods. The floor is perforated with two small holes to admit the heat, and is covered with furs to give it the convenience of a couch or a seat. When I first went in, the warmth was so intense, and the odour so strong, that I could with difficulty endure the situation: but in a few moments I recovered resolution to remain, and fell into the most copious perspiration it was possible to create in the same space of time. It was so abundant, that it appeared more like a dissolution than a sweat, and caused me to remain two or three hours in a state of supine relaxation. I found its effects soon after salutary and beneficial, and am determined to repeat the sudation whenever the opportunity is afforded me. On leaving the steam-bath, I went to the house of Adario, and dined on squirrels and fish, which his daughter had carefully prepared.

Wounds and dislocations they cure by the application of herbs, with whose properties they are well acquainted; and, what is more remarkable, gangrene and mortification never have been known to seize the parts to which such simple remedies have been applied.

When one of the nation dies, he is washed and dressed with the utmost care possible, but no tears are shed over him. Parents, sisters, or brothers, in place of manifesting affliction, rejoice that their relative is beyond the power of suffering, and that he has left a world which is only considered as a passage to another and a better life. When dressed, he is placed on a mat or bear's skin, and addressed by all his relations in turn, who recount his exploits and those of his ancestors, and then shut him up for twenty hours in a small public building called "the Cabin of Death." During this period the nation celebrate a dance and feast; and on its expiration, the Cabin of Death is opened, the corpse is put into a bark coffin, together with his hunting instruments and arms, and carried to the grave, followed by dancers, and the parents and friends chaunting hymns and songs.

The marriages are so simple, that they hardly deserve the

name. I witnessed no ceremony of the kind, but I understand from Adario, that when two young persons agree on the subject, they make known their intentions to their parents, who are not at liberty to refuse their consent, it being a Shawanee law, that the father and mother have no dominion over the person of a child. All the friends assemble at the cabin of the most ancient branch of the family, without respect to nearness of kindred, and there dance and enjoy a feast of great profusion and extent. After this festival all the friends of this party retire, except four of the oldest of each side, who require the couple to stand on a mat, and there attend to a discourse on conjugal affection, and the charms of a chaste and honest mind. On which the lovers break a small stick in pieces, and give the fragments to their friends, who keep them as evidence of the marriage, which cannot, while the stick can be put together, be denied. This ceremony is followed by inviting the nation to dance, sing, and amuse themselves till a late hour. The wedding over, the bride is conducted to her parent's home, where she is visited by her husband till she bears a child: and if that event do not take place in the ordinary course of time, the parents assemble, collect the bits of broken sticks, see that they fit together, and then dissolve the marriage, by committing the testimony to the flames. Independent of this cause of dissolution, both men and women are permitted to separate at any time they think proper, giving eight day's notice, in order that the bits of sticks may be collected and consumed. It is worthy of remark, that these kind of separations are attended with no kind of dispute, quarrel, or contradiction whatever. The women are at liberty as well as the men, to re-marry whom they may think proper, but in general they seldom enter into a second engagement till after the expiration of three and six months. On separation the children are equally divided: if the number be odd, the wife is allowed one more than the husband.

Notwithstanding this facility to change, I learn from Adario that advantage is seldom taken of it—in his nation not once in ten years. And an inviolate fidelity is maintained on both sides during marriage. As soon as a wife is announced in a state of pregnancy the matrimonial rights are suspended, and continency preserved with a religious and mystical scrupularity till nine weeks after the *accouchement*. When a woman is on the eve of that event, she retires to a private cabin, *from which men are excluded*,

and delivers herself without any assistance whatever. She remains there, attended by a few female relatives, while undergoing a purification, which lasts thirty days for a girl, and continues forty for a boy; after which she returns to the cabin of her husband. The poor child no sooner appears in the world than he is plunged into moderately warm water, then bandaged gently to a plank lined with cotton, and on which he is carried with great ease from place to place; or suspended from trees in the open air. The women always nurse their own children. That mother would be lapidated by them as a monster, who would separate herself from her new born child. When mothers lose children before they are weaned, they have recourse to a very affecting and melancholy expedient; they search the woods for some young opossum, kangaroo, or other wild beast, and rear it with their milk with the utmost care and tenderness.

The husband or wife dying, the widowhood continues six months. Mourning is not in use. In a single state the Shawaneese are susceptible of jealousy; in a married one they are ignorant of that passion; the men conceiving that no person could be found sufficiently infamous to injure his neighbour's honour, and the women would suffer death sooner than inflict on their husbands so flagitious a wound. A married woman made this beautiful reply to a person who met her in the woods, and implored her to love and look on him: "Oulamar, *who is for ever before my eyes*, hinders me from seeing you or any other person."

The children always take the name of the mother. On asking Adario the reason, he replied, that as the child received its substance from the mother, it was but reasonable it should transmit her name to posterity, and be a recompense for attentions and trouble.

When a woman has lost her husband, if he has left any brothers it is expected that she should marry one of them after the customary period of widowhood; and when a wife dies and leaves any sisters 'tis understood that the husband should marry one.

Among the Shawaneese there are a few who observe celibacy. They are treated with great consideration:—I could not learn why. Idiots are also treated with great respect. Of the motive of this I am also ignorant. I have remarked that when once a single woman bears a child she can never after get married; and I should have added, that, though many take drugs to prevent this misfortune, there

are many who prefer pregnancy, which entitles them to lead without reproach a future life of freedom and dissipation. This class of women are called, *Tckoue ne Keoussa*, nymphs of the woods, because they are addicted to hunting, and associate with the men in all the perils and hardships of the chase. The parents never restrain them from this conduct: on the contrary, they appear to approve of it, saying, that their daughters are mistresses of their own persons, —that they have a right to dispose of them, and to act as they think proper. The children are reckoned legitimate, and enjoy all the privileges of those born in wedlock, with this difference, that the chiefs and elders of council are not allowed to make them their heirs, nor are they suffered to intermarry into certain families, remarkable in the nation for military valour or political wisdom.

Such are the particulars I have obtained respecting the Shawanee people, in whose history I am persuaded you take an interest.

The people of the village carry on a considerable trade with the boats which descend the river. They sell them furs and horn tips, and receive in exchange ball, powder, whiskey, tobacco, beads, ornaments, and blankets.

The land around the village is not of the best quality, and if it were it would remain neglected. Indians seldom cultivate more than a little corn for their own immediate want. They have a very fine breed of dogs, and domesticated fowls abound about their settlements. As the Mississippi furnishes nothing, no boat should leave the Ohio without six weeks provision at least. I took advantage of this knowledge, and filled my coops with fowls, and bought a couple of live pigs. I had no occasion to procure any thing more, for Adario sent me twenty haunches of venison excellently preserved, and some bear's meat well dried, in lieu of a little tobacco I had given him,—an agreeable trait of Indian gratitude.

LETTER XXXIV.

Massac Fort—The Commandant's successful Means of preventing Disease—Entrance of the Mississippi—A View of that immense River—St. Charles, Bon-homme, and New Versailles Villages—Osage, Kanous, and other Indian Nations—Kaskaskia River and Town—Kahokia Village—Illinois River—Other Rivers joining the Mississippi.

Mouth of the Ohio, Sept. 1806.

A FEW hours after I left the Shawanee village I arrived at Massac, a fort garrisoned by a company of regulars of the United States, and commanded by a captain, from whom I received much attention and intelligence. Massac stands on a high bank in the bend of the river, and commands a very extensive view of hill, dale, and water. It is composed of about twenty houses, the offices, dwelling, and the soldiers' barracks, which give it a novel appearance.

Some years ago Massac was as unhealthy as the worst island in the West Indies, the garrison perished for several successive seasons, and the reputation of the place became so bad that the soldiers deserted, and officers threw up their commissions, when ordered on its service. Now out of one hundred men there are but seven on the doctor's list, and only twenty have died within three years. A circumstance so uncommon excited all my curiosity, and brought me to the knowledge of a fact, that the unwholesomeness of America is to be attributed to local causes, and not to a deleterious climate.

When captain R., a philosopher and a man of science, came to fort Massac about three years ago, he took a view of the vicinity of the town, and sought the principles of that malignant disease which had been so destructive to all who had before garrisoned the fort. He soon discovered that the back of the town was subject to inundation, and that a chain of ponds received the waters of the flush, and retained them till exhausted by evaporation, a gradual process effected principally by the action of a burning sun, water stagnated, or drawn into the atmosphere in a state

sufficient to impregnate it with fœtid smells, and fatal poison. Having satisfied himself of these causes of the prevailing disorders of the fort, captain R. resolutely resolved to remove them. With this intent he employed the whole of his garrison in opening communications between one pond and another, and in making canals to the ponds both from the upper and lower part of the river. The first spring flush entered by the upper channel, passed like a mill-course through the ponds, and as the water subsided, carried all their foul and putrid contents through the lower channel into the river. The following season saw this labour crowned with the happiest success; the vernal fever was suppressed, the summer flux was gone, and the autumnal vomit and hæmorrhage entirely disappeared. Nothing remained but the complaints common to all parts of the river; such intermittents, pleurisies, and a species of slow disease which consumes the body, extinguishes the natural heat of the blood, and changes the complexion into a livid pale.

The particular regulations which captain R. sees observed in the garrison, contribute much to the preservation of its health. The consumption of whiskey is limited, cleanliness is insisted on, and industry rewarded: the men employed according to their original professions, and paid tenpence per day over and above their pay as soldiers of the United States.

As the gentlemen are fond of sport, they find much amusement in the adjacent country, which abounds with game of every sort. The fishing is also good immediately under the battery. Nor is sporting a mere act of pastime but of necessity. The garrison being furnished by government with nothing more than rations of bread and salt pork, is compelled to seek for fresh provisions in the woods, or to procure them from Indians in exchange for spirits, powder, and toys. The Indians are a few Illinois settled in the rear of the fort.

There are about twenty American plantations around Massae, who furnish the inhabitants with corn, poultry, and hogs, and at a much dearer rate than I have as yet heard on the river banks. This is owing to there being such few settlements, and also to the number of boats which put in for refreshment, causing a greater demand than the supply can at all times meet.

I left Massae with the sentiments which ought ever to occupy the mind of a stranger, after experiencing a generous and courteous reception from persons on whose hospitality

and kindness he had no manner of claim, and gained this position in a short day's run of twenty-five miles, which afforded me no matter fit to advance your information or entertainment. I had to be sure to observe that the river increased in width and beauty, and that the current, though entirely contrary to my expectations, became so sluggish, that I was forced to have recourse to my oars to make any kind of way. On approaching within a few miles of the Louisiana shore I discovered this strange effect: it was the Mississippi, which in awful grandeur crossed the mouth of the Ohio, and backed the water up against the stream. The contention of the floods, the dreadful accounts I had heard of the navigation of the Mississippi, the magnificence of the objects around me, and the general impression, created an inexpressible sensation of a view of nature on a scale of such sublimity, diversity, and magnitude.

Under these influences I lay by here under the point of land formed by the intersection of the two rivers, and sprang ashore on the right bank of the Ohio.

No river in the world can vie with the Mississippi for magnificence and utility. Its source is ascertained to be three thousand miles from the sea, following its windings. From nearly opposite the Illinois river, the western bank of the Mississippi is generally higher than the eastern. From Miner-a-fu to the Iberville, the eastern is the highest. It is so remarkably crooked, that from the mouth of the Ohio to New Orleans, in a direct line, which does not exceed six hundred miles, the distance by water is more than one thousand miles. In common seasons it generally affords fifteen feet of water from the mouth of the Messauri to that of the Ohio. In time of flushes a first rate man of war may descend with safety. The mean velocity of its current may be computed to be four miles an hour. Its length is various, from one and a half to two miles. Its mouth is divided into several channels, which continually change their direction and depth.

From the mouth of the Ohio to that of the Messauri is two hundred and thirty miles by water, and one hundred and forty by land. The Mississippi below the Messauri is always muddy. The current is so rapid, that it never can be stemmed by the force of the wind alone acting on sails. A bateaux passes from the mouth of the Ohio to the mouth of the Mississippi in three weeks, and takes three months to return, with the help of the wind and the constant labour of sixteen oars. During its floods, which are as periodical as those of the

Nile, the largest vessels may descend. The inundations extend farther, and rather on the western than on the eastern side, covering the lands in some places for more than one hundred miles from its banks. These floods begin in April, and do not entirely subside till the end of August. Above the mouth of the Messauri, the Mississippi is as clear and gentle as the Ohio, and nearly as wide: the period of its floods are nearly the same, but not rising to so great a height.

The Mississippi yields turtle of a peculiar sort, perch, trout, gar, pike, mullets, herrings, carp, spatula, a fish of fifty-six pounds weight, cat-fish of one hundred pound weight, buffalo fish and sturgeon. Alligators abound, and have been seen as high up as the Acanas. It also has a prodigious quantity of herons, cranes, ducks, brants, geese, swans, and water-pelicans swimming on its surface, and breeding in its vicinity.

The Messauri is in fact the principal river, contributing more to the common stream than does the Mississippi, even after its junction with the Illinois. It is remarkably cold, muddy, and rapid. Its overflowings are considerable. They happen during the months of June and July. Six miles above the mouth it is brought to the compass of a quarter of a mile's width, and yet is navigable two thousand miles upwards. It heads far westward of the Rio Norte. The mouth of the Ohio from Santa Fé on the river Norte, is one thousand miles. From Santa Fé to its mouth in the Gulph of Mexico is one thousand two hundred miles. The road from New Orleans to Mexico, the Rio Norte at a post called by the same name, eight hundred miles below Santa Fé: and from this post to New Orleans is about one thousand two hundred miles; this making two thousand miles between Santa Fé and New Orleans, passing down the North River, Red River, and Mississippi; whereas it is two thousand two hundred and thirty miles through the Messauri and Mississippi. From the same port of Rio Norte, passing near the mines of La Sierra and Larguana, which are between the north river and the river Salina, is three hundred and seventy-five miles; and thence passing the mines of Charsas, Zaccatieas, and Potosi, to the city of Mexico, is three hundred and seventy-five miles more, making in all one thousand five hundred and fifty from Santa Fé to the city of Mexico. From New Orleans to the city of Mexico is then about one thousand nine hundred and fifty miles: the roads, after setting out from the Red River, near Natchitoches, are generally

parallel with the coast, and about two hundred miles from it, till it enters the city of Mexico.

Thirty miles up, and on the north side of the Messauri, is a village called St. Charles. It is of a tolerable size, and the principal trade is with the Indians. About eight miles above this, the village and settlement of Bon homme opens to view; twenty-six miles farther up is the village of New Versailles; and about seven hundred and fifty miles above, a little off from the river, is the Grand Sors, a principal Indian trading town.

The Osage nation of Indians reside on the banks of a river of the same name, eighty leagues from where it enters the Messauri on the right. They consist of about one thousand warriors of a gigantic stature, being seldom under six feet, and frequently between six and seven in height. They are accused of being a cruel and ferocious race, and are feared and hated by all the other Indian tribes. From the mouth of the Messauri to that of the Osage river is computed at eighty leagues.

The river Kanous empties in about sixty leagues farther up on the same side, and eighty leagues up it reside the Kanous nation, consisting of about three hundred warriors.

Sixty leagues above the Kanous, and two hundred from the mouth of the Messauri, still on the right bank, is the Riviere Platte, or Shallow River, remarkable for its quick-sands; near its confluence dwell the Octatoctas, a nation of Indians of about two hundred warriors. Forty leagues up Riviere Platte, and far distant from Santa Fé, is a nation of Indians called Panis, in number about seven hundred warriors, who reside in four villages, hunt but little, and seem disposed to follow agricultural pursuits.

The villages of the Mohos nation are three hundred leagues from the Mississippi, and one hundred from the Rivierre Platte. This nation consisted, in 1791, of five hundred warriors: I am now informed that the small pox has almost entirely cut them off.

The Poncas nation dwell about fifty leagues above the Mohos Indians, on the left bank of the Messauri, in number near two hundred warriors. About four hundred and fifty leagues from the Mississippi, on the right bank of the Messauri, reside the Aricaras nation, to the number of seven hundred warriors. This nation is friendly towards the whites; its members have been continual victims of the Sioux and Mandawessees, who, being better provided with firearms than themselves, have always taken advantage of the

helpless situation of the friends of *white men*, and murdered them on all occasions without mercy.

Farther up the Messauri there are many other nations of Indians; the Mandan, Cahego, &c. of whom very little is as yet known, either of their numbers, manners, or customs. But the Manduessees, who frequent the country between the north bank of the Messauri and Mississippi, take every method to prevent all communication between the nations higher up and those below them; and when this is attempted they massacre all who fall into their hands.

Kaskaskias river enters on the east side thirty miles above, and the town of Kaskaskia is situated six miles up it in a beautiful plain. At present many of the buildings are standing vacant, and the place has a dreary and forsaken appearance. It was settled more than one hundred years ago by emigrants from Lower Canada.

Sixty miles farther up is the village of Kahokia, situated at the mouth of a river of the same name. It is a considerable and pleasant place, and courts of justice are held there for that part of the Indiana territory.

Seventeen miles above on the west side is the Messauri, and twenty miles above the Messauri on the east or right hand side, the Illinois river enters. Up the Illinois are coal mines and salt ponds, a stone called fliche, from which the Indians make their flints and arrow points; and on the high banks of the river, one hundred and ninety miles up, are red and white cedar and pine trees; and it is said that an alum hill is on a branch emptying into it, called Mine river, about two hundred and twenty miles up. Mulberry trees are there large and numerous; indigo has been raised with success, and tobacco, hemp, and flax can be cultivated with little labour. The sugar maple grows to great perfection. Fruit trees of all kinds succeed admirably, and dying and medicinal plants every where abound.

About one hundred and sixty miles above the Illinois, Riviere á la Roche empties itself into the Mississippi, on the same side as the Illinois.

Farther up, two hundred and ten miles, Riviere á la Mene enters, and is navigable for fifty miles.

Ouiconson river is one hundred and twenty miles above, navigable near two hundred miles.

Black river empties in further up, one hundred and fifty miles, and is navigable one hundred miles.

Buffalo river flows in sixty-five miles above; navigable near one hundred miles.

Sotaux river is fifteen miles above; navigable eighty miles.

St. Croix river, with numerous lakes, sixty miles; these are navigable nearly two hundred miles.

The above rivers all enter the Mississippi on the east or right hand side.

From the mouth of St. Croix to the falls of St. Anthony is about ninety miles. These falls are in latitude 45 N. and from the mouth of the Mississippi are two thousand two hundred and eighty miles. Boats may pass over these falls in safety in high water, but when the water is low they are very dangerous. Above the falls are numerous small lakes which communicate with each other; and into a principal one on the N. W. side empties the Blue river, which is very considerable, and has been navigated by French traders three hundred miles up; so that the Mississippi, in fact, loses its name at the falls of St. Anthony, and from thence northward takes the name of the Blue river. Admitting that the Mississippi still retains its name above the falls, it is said to take its source in the White Bear Lake, in lat. 48. 15. long. 23. 17. west.

LETTER XXXV.

Louisiana—Its History—Progress through the Country—Cape Farida—Happle Creek—St. Genevieve—Lead-Mines—St. Louis Town—The Valley of Bones—Confluence of the Messauri and Mississippi.

St. Louis, Upper Louisiana, September, 1806.

ON landing on the Louisiana or west side of the Mississippi, for the first time I felt a very proud and pleasing emotion. I had successfully explored a vast extent of country, and I then arrived in one to me more perfectly new than any other, and consequently more interesting.

The country east and west of the Mississippi was called Florida, by Sebastian Cabot, who visited that part of America, by order of Henry VII. of England, about the year 1497.

John Pontio de Leon, a Spaniard, arrived on the coast, anno 1512, attempted a settlement, and erected a small fort.

The subjects of Charles X. of France, seem to have made several attempts to settle in the country, but were always defeated by the Spaniards, until the year 1684, when M. de la Sale discovered the mouth of the Mississippi, and built on the bay a fort which he called Fort Louis. The founder having been assassinated, the fort was abandoned, until anno 1698, when captain Iberville penetrated up the Mississippi, and, having planted a few settlers, called the country Louisiana. Until this time the Spaniards had a few forts on the coast, of which Pensacola seems to have been the principal; fourteen leagues east of the Isle of Dauphin. About the year 1720, M. la Sueur navigated the river seven hundred and sixty leagues up, and asserted that he had not arrived at its source. From that time it remained in the hands of France, whose monarchs made several grants to its traders, in particular to M. Crossat, in 1712, and some years after to the well known projector, M. Law, who relinquished it in 1731.

By a secret convention, 3d. of November, 1762, the French government ceded so much of the province of Louisiana as lies beyond the Mississippi, as well as the island of New Orleans, to Spain.

In 1763, it was ceded by France and Spain to Great Britain, from whom it was conquered by Spain during the American revolutionary war, and confirmed to Spain by treaty, 1783.

By the treaty of St. Ildefonso, 1st October, 1800, which was confirmed by that of Madrid, of the 21st March, 1801, the whole province was ceded by Spain to France, and from France it passed by treaty and sale to the American Government, who took possession of it on the 20th of December, 1803.

It now goes by the name of the Upper and Lower Louisiana; St. Louis being the chief town of the former, and New Orleans that of the latter province. Each has a governor residing in the respective principal places, and the laws and administrations are changed from the Spanish to the American.

The eastern boundary is the Mississippi, the western is not ascertained. The southern is the Gulph of Mexico, and the northern is the country of Hudson's Bay and the Lakes.

I no sooner landed on the Louisiana shore, than I made for the only house I could perceive in sight. I reached it

in a few minutes, and was very courteously received by don Castro, the proprietor.

He also keeps a tavern, or house of entertainment, as it is called, adjoining his own dwelling, and furnishes travellers, merchants, and boatmen, with every accommodation during their stay, and with the provisions, &c.

When Louisiana belonged to the king of Spain, the Spanish cultivators valued their improved lands at from twenty to one hundred dollars per acre. Now that it appertains to the United States, they offer the same settlements for one dollar per acre: in many instances for a quarter of a dollar, and some families of a high sense of honour and national pride, abandon their possessions and go into Mexico without receiving any benefit from their former pursuits, or the many years they consumed in the application and toil attending agricultural improvement.

I passed but one night at don Castro's. In the morning he provided me with a guide and horses for myself and servant. I departed very early, as it was my intention to reach Cape Jarido, a distance of forty-five miles, by night, I found the country very much broken, hilly, and so thick of wood, that the prospect was every where intercepted.

After a toilsome ride, and an indifferent accommodation during the night at a Louisiana inn, on turning out with the sun in the morning, I discovered Cape Jarido to be a small settlement inhabited by a few French Canadians. Several Spanish families resided in it a few years ago; they abandoned it when it became subject to the laws of the American government.

I pursued my journey, and arrived at Happle Creek, twenty-five miles from Jarido, in time for dinner. The country through which I passed was hilly, wooded, and uninhabited. Happle Creek is also a small French settlement. The inhabitants, as well as those of Jarido, live in the manner of Indians, that is, by hunting, and in bartering the furs for powder, ball, arms, blankets, and spirits. They cultivate very little ground, and build houses which are neither wind nor water-proof. On the same afternoon I rode fifteen miles farther on, and stopped at the house of an Arcadian for the night. I found him a plain hospitable man. He was a Scotchman by birth, a Frenchman by education, a Spaniard by adoption, and an American *par force*. His name originally was Gordon, but having served in the army of Spain, his comrades conferred on him, according to their

practice, a *nomme de guerre*, since when he has been known as don Gordano.

The evening of the day I left don Gordano's I arrived at St. Genevieve; and what was very interesting, I heard the bells of the catholic church ring for vespers, long before I entered the town.

I did not wander from the peal, but rode on with speed and animation, and put up at an inn which had strong indication of comfort. I was by no means disappointed: the landlord, a lively Frenchman, looked after my horses, and his wife made me a cup of coffee with as much perfection as I ever drank it at the *Palais Royale*, or at the foot of *Pont Neuf*. After which I lounged through the village, and chatted *en passant* with the inhabitants, who were all in groups outside their doors: the women at work, the children at play, and the men performing music, singing songs, or telling stories. It needed but a *coup d'œil* to discover in this the vestige of Spanish customs. A little more observation soon convinced me of the justice of the conjecture. St. Genevieve was once principally inhabited by Spaniards; a disgust to an American connection has driven them nearly all off; but their manners and habits remain with the French settlers who originally resided among them. Hence I have heard the guittar resound soon after sun-set, with the complaints and amorous tales of the village swains, and heard the same hand which toiled all day in the wilderness and in the waste, strike the tender notes of love in the evening.

The custom seemed to pervade all ranks. Nearly every house had its group, and every group its guittar, fidler, story-teller, or singer. As the evening advanced and the heat diminished, walking commenced, and towards midnight the music of the village united, the little world crowded to the spot, and danced with infinite gaiety and mirth till past one in the morning. The waltz had most votaries; the *pas de deux* next, and the fandango was the favourite of the few remaining Spaniards of the village.

St. Genevieve stands on the west bank of the river, is formed of about sixty neat low houses, and contains about four hundred souls. The present population principally consists of Canadian, French, and Anglo-Americans. There are three public buildings, a church, federal court, and market-house. The church is a Spanish structure decorated and improved by the French. At the upper end there is a beautiful altar, the *fronton* of which is brass, gilt

and enriched in *medio-relievo*, representing the religious of the old, diffusing the benefits of the gospel over the new world. In the middle of the altar there is a crucifix of brass, gilt, and underneath a picture well copied from Raphael, representing the Madona and Child, St. Elizabeth, and St. John. In a second group there is a St. Joseph; all perfectly well drawn and coloured. The action, beauty, and grace of the virgin are beyond expression, and the little Jesus and St. John are charming.

The Genevieseans' commerce is tolerably extensive for their numbers and isolate situation. They export lead to a great amount, and import flour, British goods, French and West-India produce. Their profit or floating wealth is employed in the purchase of land. Every Geneviesean is a land proprietor.

Lands in the vicinity of wealthy settlements fetch five dollars per acre; at a distance or near any Indian connection, they may be had for about twopence, and often less.

The country about St. Genevieve, for a little distance, is well adapted for settlements, and has a few scattered ones, which make some show of opulence and improvement. I rode fifteen miles west of the village, to visit a lead furnace, where any quantity of lead may be had, from three to five halfpence per pound. The country abounds in lead mines. Mines of antimony are also said to have been found in the bowels of the earth. This idea has obtained so far, as to induce a company of gentlemen of Philadelphia to send an agent in pursuit of so useful an article. I am not able to ascertain his success. I found the face of the land around the lead-mine very broken and barren. The hills appeared cast together as in some convulsion of nature, and exhibited rugged projecting cliffs and deep yawning caves.

This town, St. Louis, called by some Pain Cone, is the capital of the Upper Louisiana. It contains about three hundred houses, eighteen hundred souls, and several extensive mercantile stores. Before its possession by the United States, which took place on the 20th December 1803, it was the residence of the Spanish governor.

St. Louis was settled about the year 1765, by a number of French families from the east side of the river, and contained in 1769, one hundred and twenty families, reckoned at eight hundred souls; and there belonged to the village two hundred negro slaves, eight hundred black cattle, and swine and poultry in abundance.

The town and settlement are said to be very healthy. I

believe from my own observations, thai the Messauri is more favourable to health and longevity than the Ohio and Mississippi.

Above twenty miles above St. Louis, the Messauri empties itself into the Mississippi on the west side.

This place had formerly the reputation of being extremely agreeable, and the inhabitants to be as virtuous as the people of St. Genevieve; but since the arrival of a host of Americans, the conduct, the manners, and the pursuits of the inhabitants are changed. Billiards and gaming of all sorts are carried on to a shameful excess; and drunkenness, fighting, violence, and rapine, are pursued with as much zeal as they are in the Virginian and Kentuckeyan states.

The environs are full of gardens and fruit-trees, which, in the proper season must perfume the air, and be highly pleasing. One of the entertainments of the inhabitants is to rove in the fields and gardens after sun-set, and enjoy the delightful odours of the flowers, or refresh themselves with fruits of exquisite taste and flavour. The hills which lie to the south and west of the town, branch off in so happy a manner, that they form a great number of charming vales, enlivened and enriched by numberless rills of water.

I passed on through these vales, and to the back of the hills in search of a quantity of bones, said to cover a large space of ground in that direction.

Two leagues brought me to the Valley of Bones. It is three hundred paces long, and not quite so many wide. They lie in the same promiscuous manner, and are of the same numerous and extraordinary species I have before described. I dug up several bones of immense magnitude, and some entire skeletons of non-descript animals.

Returned from this expedition, I struck across the country to the Messauri, to a place about thirty miles above its confluence with the Mississippi. Having sent my horses back, I embarked in a skiff, and descended by water to this place. The Messauri, at that distance from its mouth, passes through a vale, which it enriches and adorns to so wonderful a degree, that it scarcely can be equalled; for the situations through which it passes and sports, are so picturesque, so various and surprising, that the senses may rather be said to be ravished than simply to be pleased. In some places the river forces its way through cliffs, and bursts impetuous through all impediments, and rages and dashes against the sides and rocks, and in others it spreads out into a liquid plain, grows smooth and gentle, and forms

meanders through the verdure which it creates and nourishes. The junction of the two rivers is very beautiful; the waters of the Messauri being white, and those of the Mississippi a transparent green. They do not mix for a considerable time, but repel each other, and preserve their particular colours for five or six miles at least. The water of the Messauri is so thick, that one third of a tumbler is always a strong sediment: the sediment, which precipitates very fast, leaves a water palatable and pleasant. On turning out of the mouth of the Messauri into the Mississippi, I found the current running four miles an hour, and descended with it to here in less than six hours.

LETTER XXXVI.

Mississippi River—An Evergreen Species of Plane Tree—A curious Cavern—Chalk Bank—Bayeau de She—*New Madrid.*

New Madrid, or Lance le Grass, Bank of the Mississippi, Oct. 1806.

IN many respects the Mississippi is far inferior to the Ohio. The Mississippi is one continued scene of terrific grandeur, of unmixed sublimity, impressing a veneration and awe, which are adverse to satisfaction and enjoyment, whereas the general magnificence of the Ohio is chequered every here and there by a profusion of local beauties, on which the mind can relax and repose in safety and comfort. However, I am too far advanced to recede; and shall continue on to the end of my destined voyage, though I see it pregnant with sufferings and danger.

On the Indiana side above the Ohio, I discovered a remarkably fine plane-tree, not of the common species, as I perceived from the certain characteristics it possessed, and from being informed that it never in winter sheds its leaves. This tree has never been noticed as a native of America, that I know of, notwithstanding its utility, being of great bulk, and permanent beauty and foliage.

I went in pursuit of a cave which I heard much celebrated by the hunters I had met with in the upper country. I found it after infinite labour; for there is no penetrating the woods without groping the way through reeds and vines,

and hesitating at every step for fear of vipers and snakes, I was only accompanied by Cuff, having to leave the other man to guard the boat, and ward off floating trees, which would otherwise make her drift from the bank. On discovering the mouth of the cavern we each lighted a large flambeau of gum-wood, and entered a passage which wound about like a labyrinth for more than fifty yards, and at length led to a spacious apartment of one hundred and fifty paces in length, and upwards of one hundred feet high; the form irregular, and the floor uncommonly rough; the roof arched, and in several places rising out into large round knobs, some bristling with bright points, and others regularly dented, representing bunches of grapes, festoons of flowers, and lances of considerable length. The vault and sides also, were covered with innumerable productions which represented the roots, branches, and heads of various shrubs, executed with as much perfection as if nature meant to shew the extent of her power by operating in the vegetation of stones. The figures are all white, transparent, crystallized, and generally aslant, and in different beds like the Judaic stone. The splendour of the place when illuminated by torches is indescribable. At the extremity of the cave I entered another passage, which had so many turnings and intricate windings, that I feared to be entangled, and made the best of my way out. In the mouth or entrance, which is six feet high, and nine wide, my attention was struck by several names and dates engraven on the sides. Two of the dates were very far remote, they were 1699 and 1714. I had no conception that the river had been explored at such periods. The engravings are made out with great facility, though the letters are no longer sunk, but swelled out, either from the vegetation of the rock, or from some adventitious or external cause. When the persons were engraving their names on the walls of the passage to the cavern, little did they imagine that the furrowing wrought by their knives would be insensibly filled up, and in time advanced with a kind of embroidery, about a line high in some places, and near three lines in others: so that the characters, instead of being hollow and concave, as they were at first, are now turned convex, and come out of the rock like *basso relievo*, or embossed work. The matter of them is white, though the stone they issue from is grey. Perhaps this *basso relievo* may be a kind of callosity formed by the nutritious juice of the stone, extravasated insensibly into the channelings made by the engraver.

Two miles below the Iron red-banks, I came abreast of a large island called Wolf Island, and put in shore to examine a place called the *Chalk Banks*. I am of opinion that the bank is formed of a substance highly esteemed by the ancients, and known to us by the name of *terra cimolia*. The substance is a white chalk, very heavy, without taste, and abounds with a small grit, which sets the teeth on edge: it is easily crumbled, but it does not ferment, nor has it the least effervescence when put into water; it only melts away, and becomes soapy and adhesive. Being much at a loss for soap, I took several pieces of the chalk into my boat, and found it answer all the purposes of that necessary article. It is very cleansing and pleasant to the hand, and my man has made a lye from some of it, with which he washes the linen, and esteems it preferable to soap. There is one good use of it, and I believe the ancients employed the same material (if it be the *terra cimolia*) medicinally, and attributed to it the virtue of discussing tumours, and assisting to remove other sources of disease. I believe Pliny mentions it, and says that it is successfully employed in cleaning silks and stuffs.

Four miles below the Chalk Banks, I passed by the mouth of *Bayeau de Shé*, on the left hand shore. As there is nothing more formidable to the navigator than a *bayeau*, I must endeavour to give you some faint idea of its character and power.

As the Mississippi for the most part flows through an excavated ridge, like an artificial canal, whose banks are elevated above the adjacent country, it is subject to extraordinary inundations, when in the highest state, which form those extensive swamps, that occasion the nuisance of myriads of mosquitoes and other insects, and also supply streams called bayeaus with a body of water, which issuing from the main river with astonishing rapidity, causes a violent vortex, whose action extends a considerable way into the river. Boats once dragged into a bayeau are next to lost, it being almost impossible to force so unwieldy a machine as a flat bottomed boat against so powerful a current.

After a run of four miles, I put into a cove in a small willow-island, for the night, and a dreary one I passed at it. The mosquitoes attacked me with unusual ferocity, and the soil was too rotten to suffer me to sleep on shore. My only amusement was fishing, and firing at some pelicans which floated past me in the stream. I could get no manner of rest from the mosquitoes, till weary with their re-

peated attacks, I lay down on the roof of my boat, covered close over with bears' skins. This expedient succeeded, but caused as violent a sudation as I experienced in the Shawanee bath. It relaxed me so much that I had to throw myself into the river, to recover strength and energy sufficient to steer my boat. I left this island by dawn of day, and after having passed three other islands in the course of sixteen miles, arrived here to breakfast.

This town, which is situated on the west bank of the river, and in lat. 36. 30 north, contains about forty log and frame houses, a prison, and a church. It owes its origin to a colonel George Morgan, who conceiving the site favourable for the establishment of a town, applied for a grant, and obtained it from the king of Spain, then lord of the soil. Furnished with the grant, the colonel repaired to the eastern states, and there propagated so exalted an opinion of his new possessions, that he soon prevailed on numbers to embark with him in the speculation, and to erect a town, and dignify it with the name of *New Madrid*. In the first instance the society were delighted with the situation, in a beautiful rich plain; but experience soon taught them that it did not run two miles back, that the front was limited to a mile, and that the vicinity of the swamp would render it periodically unhealthy. Add to this, that an inundation occurred, which swept off the greatest part of the new town, carried off the government house, and laid a foundation for a belief, that the entire plain will, in process of time, be consumed by the river. In the last ten years the plain has lost one hundred yards along its front, and in ten years more there is no moral probability that the town will be in existence; the bank on which it stands being a fine mould of fifty feet deep, can make no resistance to the body of water which beats against it. It every hour gives way, and though the inhabitants recede, and build their houses nearer the swamp, they find the river gain on them, and that they must one day perish in some untimely flood, or abandon the establishment of the town, according to their original intention.

I must give you an unfavourable account of the inhabitants. A stupid insensibility makes the foundation of their character. Averse to labour, indifferent to any motive of honour, occupied by mean associations, without solicitude for the future, and incapable of foresight and reflection, they pass their lives without thinking, and are growing

old without getting out of their infancy, all the faults of which they studiously retain. Gaming and drinking at times rouse them from this supine state into a depravation of manners, and furious spirit of outrage, which debase still more the distorted features of their mind. They are composed of the dregs of Kentuckey, France, and Spain, and subsist by hunting, and trading with the Indians, who exchange with them rich furs for whiskey, blankets, ammunition and arms. Gardens succeed well—there are several about the town, and some peach orchards of great promise. Agriculture is entirely neglected. I could not get a loaf of bread in the town, nor any kind of provisions whatever, though I offered any price.

The Roman church is yet sustained, and service performed, though the revenue allotted it by the government of Spain is withheld by the United States.

LETTER XXXVII.

Little Prairie—Chickassaw Bluffs—A Hurricane.

Mouth of the Ozark, or Orkansas River, October, 1806.

THE Mississippi affords so little subject for anecdote or interesting description, that I have made a run of three hundred and fifty miles since I last wrote to you, in search of materials for your information.

On leaving New Madrid, the first settlement I perceived was that of *Little Prairie:* it consists of from twenty to thirty houses, built on an elevated plain, whose extent is limited by a swampy boundary. It is a wretched sickly place, and would be evacuated, were the inhabitants not encouraged to remain by the trade with the Indians, which they find profitable, though attended by periodical or rather perpetual attacks of sickness.

The next and only settlement after the Prairie is the third Chickassaw Bluffs, making a distance of nearly one hundred miles without a habitation. The Chickassaw Bluffs are one hundred and fifty one miles from the mouth of the Ohio, I should have found it a very lonesome stretch, had

I not been incessantly employed in preserving the boat from danger, from rocks, sawyers, and snags; and from the eddies, gulphs, bayeaus, points, and bends in the river.

The attention is also kept awake by the necessity of looking out for islands, in order to choose the proper channel, and to pull for it in time, or before the boat falls into the race of a wrong one. Numbers of boats are lost annually, on account of not paying attention to this important point.

The Chickassaw Bluff is a very high red bank on the eastern side of the river. On it are erected a fort, barracks for a company of soldiers and a few artillery men, and houses and stores for two state commissioners, who reside there for the purpose of conducting the public trade existing between the American government and the Choctaw and Chickataw nations, who live, by permission, in the country east of the fort. The high plain on which the buildings are erected, is very beautiful; but, like the other settlements on the Mississippi which I have mentioned, is limited, and subsides into ponds and swamps. It maintains about a dozen families, who raise corn, breed poultry and pigs, and supply boats descending the river with what common provisions they may want. Neither the settlers nor the garrison consider the Bluffs unhealthy, though they are visited by intermittent fevers and various other periodical attacks. The land is as rich as possible; and in a garden belonging to the garrison, all kinds of fruits and vegetables succeed to a perfection seldom attained elsewhere. The view from the fort is one of those grand ones which nature occasionally gives to excite admiration and wonder. Over the Louisiana shore the sight has no limit, but rushes unrestrained over an immense expanse of forest. To the right it is arrested by a fantastic bend in the river, where the banks are embellished with uncommon beauty; to the left it strays amidst a cluster of islands, through the channels of which the water meanders; and in the rear it rambles over cultivated fields and pasture lands, of much rural character and extent. The view of the fort, on approaching it from the opposite side, has a very fine and picturesque effect. In consequence of the bend in the river, it is hurried on the view from a very favourable point. In the distance the principal Bluff forms a noble object. Its front is shaggy and broken, and the interstices of soil are filled with trees and shrubs. On its summit stands a lonely watch-tower; on its brow the garrison and fort mounted with guns. The gardens and improvements are elevated

and extensive ; and the offices and commissioners' buildings add greatly to the general effect. You may not conceive highly of a view of this nature, but I can assure you, after a long and dreary voyage, it has charms for the mind which cannot be described.

In compliment to me, the governor invited all the gentlemen of the establishment to dine ; and a very sumptuous dinner we had ; it consisted of fish, venison, squirrels, and bear's meat, with a profusion of wine and dessert of Illinois nuts, a forest fruit. It was one in the morning before we parted. Some of the party reposed under the table an hour before ; for my part, the dangers and fatigues I had gone through made me too dull to get drunk ; at least I could not have been so, or I would have broken my neck in scrambling down one hundred and fifty feet of a steep declivity which led to my boat, in which I lay till roused by the garrison reveillé in the morning.

There having been no ladies at dinner the day before, I naturally concluded there were none at the fort. I was deceived. On going to breakfast, by appointment, with the governor, I was introduced to his daughter, a very interesting and fine girl of sixteen years of age. She had lost her mother a twelvemonth before ; and was left in so desolate a place without a single friend or companion of her own sex to mitigate her sufferings created by so irreparable a loss. These unhappy circumstances have given her countenance an expression of sorrow and modest confusion, which moves the heart of every beholder.

I was much pleased to discover from her conversation, which was luminous and elegant, that her father takes great pains to improve and cultivate her mind. She has read much, and, I fear, of books which excite more refinement and sensibility than are necessary for the kind of world in which she is destined to live. When the discourse turned on the virtues and decease of her mother, her fine eyes filled with tears and she silently left the hall. The father and I soon followed, and found her reclining on a little mausoleum, erected on a tumulus of earth, planted with cypress and yew trees. "This," said the father, "is the work of her own hands : the poor girl's mother lies buried here, and we often visit it when disposed to sorrow, or when events bring her strongly to our recollection."

I respected such an evidence of affliction and tenderness too much to give it interruption ; and, therefore, turned through the garden, and made preparations to depart. In a short

time I took a friendly leave of the gentlemen of the garrison, and pursued my voyage, much pleased and refreshed by my stay at the fort. I had not passed some islands which lie immediately below the Bluffs ten minutes, before very strong demonstrations of a hurricane appeared. The wind suddenly died away; the sun assumed a deep red, and glowed with unusual fury; the atmosphere was sensibly discomposed; the spring of the air relaxed to cause a difficulty of breathing; and Nature reposed in a calm, in order to gather strength for some intended work of desolation and ruin. I benefited by the fortunate interval, and pulled into the eastern shore, where I secured my boat, and waited, with deep emotion, the event of the approaching storm. A small cloud announced its intention of coming from the west. That cloud soon dilated its volume to an immense expanse, and moved with astonishing velocity towards me. The noise it made in the woods was like that of the sea in its utmost rage; and the havoc it made was dreadful. The beasts of the forest rushed howling to the water's edge; and the birds flew agitated and screaming over it. The trees were heard to crackle and fall; and as the storm reached the river, I could plainly perceive that it travelled in a direct line, leaving after it a strait avenue of several miles extent, in which nothing could be seen but prostrate trees, and the stumps and scattered limbs of those it had broken. On striking the water, into which it hurled every tree on the banks, it made it labour like a vortex in commotion; and as it passed over the eastern shore, it again renewed its dreadful operation, driving all before it, rending up the heaviest timber by the roots, and carrying in its convulsed bosom birds, plants, and shrubs. The effect on my boat was terrible; it drove her into the mud banks, half way across her breadth, filled her with water, and covered her over with branches and wood, propelled from the opposite side; in fine, she appeared no better than a wreck. During the action of the tempest on the river, the men and I had to jump into the water, not being able to hold on to the boat. The cloud, rapidly moving, having arrived at its destination, or having performed its office of decomposing the air of such places as occasioned it to possess most gravity, varied its course, and rushed to the southward with increased violence and velocity. After varying from point to point, it ascended the river, and forced its way northwardly, in which direction I perceived another cloud forming, of equal magnitude, and as capable of filling the mind with solicitude and terror. This latter cloud

descended the river. However, as the first hurricane had restored to the air between the two clouds its elastic and repulsive power, and true gravity, they could not approach each other but by very slow degrees, subject to pauses of considerable length, silence, and terrible solemnity. Two hours elapsed before they came into contact. The awful event was announced by vivid flashes of lightning, unceasing peals of thunder, and the precipitation of the watery parts in streams and torrents of rain. But when the two clouds rushed into the same circle, and formed but one immense globe in the dark bosom of which the electric fluid began its direful operation, my reason stood appalled, and I thought the gates of chaos, hell, and confusion were opened wide above me. The lightning, which before flashed in fine lambent flames and intermittent flakes, now took eccentric, hostile, and zigzag shapes, which perpetually traversed and opposed each other, or else it formed balls of fire, which shot in all directions through the air, rolled along the ground, or hissed over the surface of the water; and the thunder, which commenced by single peals, continued with constant and dreadful clamour. The explosions never died, and the reverberations appeared to vie with them in impetuosity and power. After an hour's contest, disputed in a style of sublime greatness, the northern cloud proved victorious, and descended the river, fertilized its burning banks, and reanimated a drooping people with the refreshment afforded by its accumulated fluid.

When the storm was over, I found I had sufficient to do without investigating meteorological appearances. My boat was water-logged, and so sunk in the mud, that I despaired for a long time of ever righting her. I at length succeeded, but not without a labour which rendered us incapable to depart: independent of fatigue, we had abundance to do to dry and clean our clothes and provisions, great part of which was entirely spoiled. Fortunately the gum-tree and cotton-tree are inflammable, and soon made an excellent fire, notwithstanding the late drenching wet. I found the storm productive of one good consequence; it annihilated the mosquitoes within its range, and allowed me to pass the remainder of the day in comfort and ease.

LETTER XXXVII.

River St. Francis—Mule River—Effects of Thunder Storms—Attack of an Alligator—Orkansas River—Ozark Village—Indians—Their Adoration to the Sun—Their Hymns.

Mouth of the Ozark, or Orkansas River, October, 1806.

FROM the situation in which I was last left, I made a run of one hundred miles without meeting any remarkable event. The whole course was destitute, nor had it on either side as much dry ground as was eligible for the safe and comfortable residence of a single individual. At the conclusion of this dismal range I passed the mouth of the river St. Francis, and came to a beautiful prairie a little below it, on which I found one solitary dwelling, inhabited by a family who traded with the Indians up the river, and occasionally dealt with the boats which descended the Mississippi.

The St. Francis enters on the right, or Louisiana side; is about three hundred yards wide at its mouth, and is navigable two hundred miles upwards. Near its confluence with the Mississippi, it is subject to inundations, but towards the head of its navigation it has high and fertile banks, which are thickly occupied by Indian nations, of whom nothing is known, as there are no white settlers among them, and as they have never been visited by any person disposed to discover their character and history.

I purchased some dried venison, and a few fowls, at half a dollar a piece, from the solitary settler at the prairie, four miles below St. Francis, and proceeded for three days more without objects to amuse or interrupt, to the mouth of the White River, which is one hundred and twenty-two miles from that of the St. Francis. The whole of that run is also destitute of man, and exhibits nature in disorder, on a large and gloomy scale. It appears to be a favourite theatre for the exhibition of hurricanes and storms. The woods are perforated in a hundred places by their destructive career, and present avenues whose termination is far beyond the sight. The avenues made by such sweeping currents of air are so very direct, perfect and narrow, that they appear the effect of art, and made as a road of communication from

town to town, or state to state. Some are so narrow as twenty yards, and others as broad as two hundred. They are very magnificent, and produce sensations of astonishment and terror.

The long portion of water to which I allude, also exhibits certain characteristics which distinguish it from the river above the Chickassaw Bluffs, and particularly from the Ohio, and all its tributary streams. The trees, plants, and shrubs, are for the most part different, and consequently present a figure, foliage, and *coup d'œil*, which not merely strike the sense as a change of decoration and scene, but as another theatre and country. Cypress-swamps of several miles extent, oak of great beauty and magnitude; cotton-trees embellished with their rich produce festooned from bough to bough, floating in the air, or drooping to the ground; quinces, hazels, bending under a profusion of fruit and catalpas, cedars and magnolias, diffusing perfume over immense wastes, are common to the Mississippi from below St. Francis, rare between that river and the Bluffs, and are seldom to be met with further north. The animal as well as the vegetable kingdom in the same situation, experiences a change. This was announced to me in a very remarkable manner: I was steering down the river in a water extremely deep, and free of all impediment whatever, when all of a sudden the boat refused to obey the helm, heeled considerably, and turned her head to the right shore. At the same moment, some ducks which were confined in a coop, firmly attached to the outside head of the boat, close to the water's edge, made an uncommon noise, and fluttered in the extreme of agitation. Though much alarmed and perplexed, I opposed the helm and one oar to the resistance, whatever it might be; but in vain, the boat wheeled entirely round, and stood down the current, stern foremost. Hearing the ducks continue their clamour, I passed to the bow, and stooping suddenly over, nearly thrust my head into the mouth of a monster, who held on to the boat with one paw, while he was employed in rending off the coop with the other. I started back with precipitation, yet soon recovered, seized a boat hook, and followed up by my two men, attacked the monster before he carried off his prize. I struck him several times without making the smallest impression on his senses, or in any manner injuring his frame. The iron glanced from him, as if resisted by polished steel, but on one of the men cleaving the claw with which he sustained himself, he made a dreadful flounce, uttered a tremendous

ery, beat in the upper plank of the boat, knocked us all three from our situation, and carried off the coop as the reward of his victory. The whole of this was effected in a manner so instantaneous, that it renders it completely indescribable.

When recovered from our consternation and fall, I again took the helm, and ordered the men to *back water* with all their might, to afford me an opportunity of seeing the monster that occasioned us so much alarm and difficulties. He soon rose about fifty yards from me, and made into shore with the coop across his mouth, and his head of more than four feet length, considerably out of the water. I steered as near as I could with safety, after him, and fired several balls, which struck and glanced off his body along the river. He landed, and to appearance, in one crush mashed the coop in pieces, and gobbled up my favourite ducks, one after another, as fast as he could catch them; for on breaking the coop I could perceive that several birds escaped abroad, and even took to the water, out of which he soon drew them. During his repast I had full leisure to examine him. He was a huge alligator, at least twenty feet long, of proportionate circumference, and with a head containing one fourth of the length of the body!

The White river, which also empties in on the right or Louisiana side, is navigable two hundred miles up, and is said to wind through a fertile and delightful country. At its mouth there is an excellent landing, where boats may be moored in safety. It is but thirty-five miles from the mouth of the White river to the post of Ozark on the Orkansas river. The best and nearest route is to go up the White river about four miles, then across to the Orkansas, through a navigable creek between the two rivers, and to keep up it about thirty miles, which brings to the village of Ozark. Being encumbered with too heavy a boat, I could not pursue this route, but dropped down twenty miles lower, and moored at the mouth of the Orkansas, whence I date this and a former letter. I here had the good fortune to get a passage in a trader's canoe to the village of Ozark, where I passed two days with much satisfaction and advantage. I shall give you the substance in a few words.

The Orkansas is on the same side with the St. Francis and the White river; that is, on the Louisiana, right, or western side. It is said to be navigable eight hundred miles up, and to water a country of great fertility and beauty. These accounts must be received with much caution, and

ought to be qualified by the facts of an unbiassed observer. For the truth is, that the immediate banks of the Louisinean western rivers from half a mile, to from two, three, and four miles back, are alone the parts which merit to be described as delightful, and eligible for agricultural pursuits. All the vast remainder is nothing more than a swamp, subject to periodical inundations, which supply ponds and lakes, and send forth exhalations so malignant and active, that they contaminate the climate of the whole region, and shed over the most distant parts the seeds of disease and death. The reason that the banks alone are profitable and pleasing, is, that the western waters flow in a ridge above the level of the country, and remain dry when the general face of the adjoining land is flooded through the means of the bayeau and sluices, which are formed in the banks of all the rivers by the periodical excess of their water.

I reached the village of the Ozark on the second day. I found the current of the river very gentle, and the banks clothed with a profusion of the finest timber and shrubs, but so choaked with cane, that there was no possibility of ascending them, or of ascertaining their extent, except through buffalo-paths, and avenues made by thunder gusts and partial currents of air, as before described. Through these it was easy to discern that the river, like the Mississippi and others, flows through a ridge, and that the banks, for the most part, subside in a swamp on either side.

The village consists of sixty houses inhabited by persons of several nations, and who reside there for the purpose of conducting a very lucrative trade with the Indians, who resort to the village from the high country, and from the Mexican plain, with furs, for which they take in return, arms, ammunition, spirits, blankets and tools, and utensils of every kind which the traders bring from New Orleans with great difficulty and expence, the distance being six hundred miles, and the current not allowing a boat to gain more than twelve or sixteen miles a day, though worked with sixteen oars.

I arrived at the village at a very fortunate period; at a time when it was filled with Indians, and surrounded with their camp. They amounted to about nine hundred, and were composed of the remnants of various nations, differing in dress, habits, and manners, so little from those I have already mentioned, that I have no occasion to go into any tedious detail, but confine myself to a subject of high interest, and in which they differed—the Indians assembled at Ozark

were worshippers of the sun; and the second day of my arrival being a grand festival among them, I had the most favourable opportunity of witnessing their adorations at the three remarkable stages of the sun's rise, meridian, and set. Take the proceedings as they occurred.

The morning was propitious, the air serene, the horizon clear, the weather calm. The nations divided into classes; warriors, young men and women, and married women with their children. Each class stood in the form of a quadrant, that each individual might behold the rising luminary, and each class held up a particular offering to the sun the instant he rose in his glory. The warriors presented their arms, the young men and women offered ears of corn and branches of trees, and the married women held up to his light their infant children. These acts were performed in silence, till the object of adoration visibly rose, when, with one impulse, the nations burst into praise, and sung an hymn in loud chorus. The lines, which were sung with repetitions, and marked by pauses full of sublimity and judgment, have been construed by an excellent interpreter into these:

"Great Spirit! Master of our lives!

"Great Spirit! master of every thing visible and invisible, and who daily makes them visible and invisible!

"Great Spirit! master of every other spirit, good or bad, command the good to be favourable to us, and deter the bad from the commission of evil!

"Oh! Grand Spirit! preserve the strength and courage of our warriors, and augment their number, that they may resist the oppression of their Spanish enemies, and recover the country and the rights of their fathers!

"Oh! Grand Spirit! preserve the lives of such of our old men, as are inclined to give council and example to the young!

"Preserve our children, multiply their number, and let them be the comfort and support of declining age!

"Preserve our corn and our animals, and let not famine desolate the land!

"Protect our villages, guard our lives! O Great Spirit! when you hide your light behind the western hills, protect us from the Spaniards, who violate the night, and do evil which they dare not commit in the presence of thy beams!

"Good Spirit! make known to us your pleasure, by sending to us the Spirit of Dreams. Let the Spirit of Dreams proclaim your will in the night, and we will perform it through the day! And if it say the time of some be closed,

send them, Master of Life! to the great country of souls, where they may meet their fathers, mothers, children, and wives, and where you are pleased to shine upon them with a bright, warm, and perpetual blaze!

"Oh Grand, Oh Great Spirit! hearken to the voice of nations, hearken to all thy children, and remember us always, for we are descended from thee!"

Immediately after this address, the four quadrants formed one immense circle of several deep, and danced, and sang hymns descriptive of the powers of the sun, till near ten o'clock. They then amused and refreshed themselves in the village and camp, and assembled precisely at the hour of twelve by my chronometer, and having formed a number of circles, commenced the adoration of the meridian sun. The following is the literal translation of the mid-day address.

"Courage! nations, courage! the Great Spirit looks down upon us from his highest seat, and by his lustre, appears content with the children of his own power and greatness.

"Grand Spirit! how great are his works, and how beautiful are they!

"He is good; is the Great Spirit, he rides high to behold us. 'Tis he who causes all things to augment and to act; He even now stands for a moment to hearken to us.

"Courage! nations, courage! The Great Spirit now above our heads, will make us vanquish our enemies; he will cover our fields with corn, and increase the animals of our woods. He will see that the old be happy, and that the young augment. He will make the nations prosper, make them rejoice, and make them put up their voice to him while he rises and sets in their land, or while his heat and his light can thus gloriously shine out."

This was followed by dancing and hymns, which continued from two to three hours, at the conclusion of which, dinners were served and eaten with great demonstrations of mirth and hilarity. I dined in a circle of chiefs on a barbecued hog and venison, very well stewed, and was perfectly pleased and gratified with the rural repast. The dinner and repose after it continued till the sun was on the point of being set. On this being announced by several who had been on the watch, the nations assembled in haste, and formed themselves into segments of circles in the face of the sun, presenting their offerings during the time of his descent, and crying aloud,

"The nations must prosper; they have been beheld by

the Great Spirit. What more can they want? Is not that happiness enough? See how he retires, great and content, after having visited his children with light, heat, and universal good!

"Oh, Grand Spirit! sleep not long in the gloomy West, but return and call thy people once again to light and life; to light and life; to light and life!"

This was also succeeded by dances and songs of praise, which lasted till eleven o'clock, at which hour they repaired to rest, some retiring to the huts that formed their camp, and others to the vicinity of fires made in the woods and along the river's banks. I took up my abode with a French settler in the village. I could understand that the Indians have four similar festivals in the year; one for every season. They distinguish them by the name of "Days of Adoration." When the sun does not shine or appear on the adoration-day, an immense fire is erected, around which the ceremonies are performed with equal devotion and care.

I must conclude this long letter with observing, that I left the Ozark village, much interested in the people whose adoration gave birth to these reflections, and arrived here after a passage down the stream of ten hours. To-morrow I proceed, and shall write to you from the Natchez.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Grand Lake—Islands of the Mississippi—A remarkable Alarm produced by the Cries of a Host of Alligators—Interesting Particulars respecting these Animals—Yazaus River—The Walnut Hills and Fort Macenry—The Grand Gulph—Bayeau Pierre, the Residence of Colonel Bruin.

The Natchez, Mississippi Left Bank, October, 1806.

AFTER leaving the mouth of the Orkansas, I had nothing to remark but the great number of islands which continued to interrupt the navigation of the Mississippi, till I came to a place known by the name of "The Grand Lake," which is ninety miles from the Orkansas, the point of my last departure.

The Grand Lake, to my astonishment, I found destitute of water. It was formerly the bed of the river; but, being abandoned by it from some incomprehensible cause, it is now filled with willows; makes a very extraordinary appearance, which is considerably heightened by an island standing in the centre, ornamented with trees. The island and trees stand so much above the willows growing in the bed of the lake, that the character of the lake and island are as conspicuous as if the one still received the contents of the river, and the other was actually surrounded by water. The willows mark all the limits of the old flood; discover all the ancient insinuosities and heads of the banks, and shew the figure, extent, and height of the island to the most minute perfection. Before the morning fog was dissipated, I was witness of a very fine phenomenon. The willows not being higher than the surface of the former water, perhaps not so high, retains the fog in the original channel, giving it the exact resemblance of the New River, and making it doubtful what course to take.

The entry to "The Grand Lake" is now a sand-bar, in which are firmly fixed, trees, beams, stumps, and logs, and the sortie is in like manner choaked up and covered with willows and shrubs. It is several miles in circumference, and three directly across.

Below the Grand Lake, and after passing several islands clothed with cotton wood, I found the river perfectly straight for a stretch of thirteen miles, and of a very majestic appearance. At the extremity is an island worn to the compass of a few acres, by the constant attrition of the current against both its sides. It is ornamented by about a dozen trees. The time cannot be far remote when this little interesting miniature will be obliterated from the face of the earth, and sink under the surface of the water which it once embellished with so much grace and picturesque beauty. Throughout this great water, this Father of Floods, as the Indians call it, in some places islands are seen sinking into annihilation; and in others they are exhibited through all the stages of their rise, expanse, verdure, and formation. Of the three hundred islands in the Mississippi, fifty have been created by Nature since its first discovery by M. La Salle, and others are forming in a manner as perceptible as any work can be to the eyes. The system pursued is simply this: when the river is in a low state, the sand-bars take up and retain the trees, logs, roots, branches, and shrubs, which float continually down the current. Among these,

the water deposits a quantity of mud, in which seeds wafted by the wind, and plants conveyed by the stream, germinate and assist in binding the infant soil. Succeeding years perform the same operations with similar effects, till the bars assume the rank of islands, and grow to several hundred acres extent. The river then contains islands of two distinct kinds, and formed from different intentions, and in a widely different manner. The first I have just described, and the second owe their origin to the sudden convulsions which rent upon the bed of the river, and left insulated spots every here and there standing, or else to their being separated from the main land by a division of currents which often occur, to force a passage through the land, and thereby form islands, and effect their own union. The meanest observer can distinguish the one description of islands from the other. Those that proceed from the gradual deposit of foreign matter on sand-bars, have a deep mould, composed of river sediment and decayed vegetable substances, which seldom produce wood of any other growth than cotton, aspin, poplar, and willows; whereas, those which have been suddenly rent from the main land, or separated from it by the continued action of the water, or successive inundations, have a fine soil over a stiff blue clay, and are richly clothed with forest timber of the greatest magnitude and most valuable character; these latter islands are sensibly wasting away, while the others are increasing in extent.

A few miles below the little island, at the sortie of the long reach, I passed a cypress-bend of sixteen miles sweep. Such is the disposition of the river to find a passage through some portion of it, that my boat had to be worked the whole way to keep her from dragging along the shore. It is the most laborious piece of navigation I have yet experienced on the river. Weary with excess of toil, I had to put too under a willow bank before the day was quite expired, as I durst not cross the mouth of a bayeau, the vortex of which I heard roaring at no great distance, till we were all refreshed and restored. Having moored the boat in security, taken a repast, and guarded ourselves as well as we could against the attack of mosquitos, bugs, ants, spiders, and flies, we lay down to rest soon after sun-set, and fell into a sound refreshing sleep. I had enjoyed it for two or three hours, when I was started up by the most lamentable cries that ever assailed the human ear. The men and I instantly assembled on the roof of the boat, to distinguish whence the accents came, and to afford assistance if in our

power. But they issued from so many directions, and expressed such a variety and number of persons afflicted with the deepest grief, that our reason and judgment were dissipated in wild conjecture, and we remained ignorant of the wretched sufferers, and of the dreadful cause of their complaint. It could not be Indians affecting distress, to seduce us on shore, and there to be put to death: it could not be the crew of wrecked boats weeping and wailing their forlorn fate! repeatedly we demanded of each other what it then could be? We hearkened. At times the cries sunk into the feeble plaints of expiring infancy, and again gradually rose into the full and melancholy swell of an adult tortured by fiends destitute of mercy and humanity. The lamentations turn by turn touched every string capable to vibrate excess of misery, and denoted the variety of sorrow incident to individuals from the loss of health, friends, fortune, and relatives. Above all, they denoted calamity in the act of supplicating relief in the strong language of sobs, sighs, and tears, and moans of inexpressible anguish and length. What were we to judge of such proceedings? How were we to act? No assistance could be afforded to distress so unknown, and so diffuse. To fly the place was impossible, and to remain in it as tremendous as death. To attempt to sleep still more absurd. We walked on the roof of the boat till the cries multiplied and increased in a manner at once to shock the senses and deafen the ears. This violent outcry was followed by plunges in the water and a rustling among the trees, which at length explained the objects of our dismay and apprehension. They were a host of alligators. We discovered them plainly, swimming along-side the boat, and running along the shore, where they uttered the piercing cries and heart-rending moans which originally excited my attention and terror. Having given up all thoughts of rest, I prepared arms, and watched for a favourable purpose of killing one of the creatures. It soon presented itself. A large animal, attracted by the scent of the living objects in the boat, swam repeatedly round it, as if searching for means of access, and had the audacity to raise his head considerably above the water, in order to make his observations more true. At that propitious juncture we all three fired in the direction of his underjaw and throat. He made an immediate flounce in the water, roared as loud as thunder, and rushed ashore directly below my boat. He there expired in dreadful agony, as could be understood from hideous bellowings and the violence with which he

beat himself against the banks. After his monstrous death, the noise of the other animals ceased, and I heard none but very low and plaintive cries, issuing from several voices in deep distress; so low, that they with difficulty reached the ear, and so plaintive, that they could not but reach the heart. The dawn disclosed the cause of this lamentation, which never ceased throughout the night. On going on shore, I found the alligator I had killed attended by sixteen or seventeen young ones, who were solicitously engaged about the dead body, running over and around it in great agitation, and whining and moaning, because they discovered it without animation, and destitute of all symptoms of life. Though somewhat affected by such a spectacle, I ordered the men to assist, and to secure me, if possible, some of the young ones, and convey them into my boat. We succeeded in taking three. They are about two feet long each, and have beautiful blue eyes, with an expression extremely soft and sensible. The mother, for it seems it is a female we killed, is nineteen feet in length, counting the head, which is three feet long, and five feet in circumference. The jaws, which extend the whole length of the head, are furnished with two large conical tusks as white as ivory. The upper jaw only moves. The scales are as hard as iron. The shape is that of a lizard.

Speaking generally, and from the best authority, the alligators of the Mississippi are from twelve to twenty-four feet in length; their bodies are covered with horny plates or scales, which are impenetrable to a rifle ball, except about their heads, and just behind their fore-legs, where they are vulnerable. The head of a full grown alligator is more than three feet long. The eyes are small, and the whole head in the water, appears at a distance like a piece of rotten floating wood. The upper jaw only moves, and this they raise so as to form a right angle with the lower one. They open their mouths while they lie basking in the sun, on the banks of rivers and creeks, and when filled with all manner of insects, they suddenly let fall their upper jaw with surprising noise, and thus secure their prey. The tusks, which are not covered by any skin or lips, give the animal a frightful appearance. In the spring, which is their season for breeding, they make a most hideous and terrifying roar, resembling the sound of distant thunder.

The alligator is an oviparous animal: their nests, which are commonly built on the margin of some lake, creek, or river, at the distance of from fifteen to twenty yards from

the high water, are in the form of an obtuse cone, about four feet high, and from four to five in diameter at their basis. They are constructed with a sort of mortar, blended with grass and herbage. First they lay a floor of this composition, on which they deposit a layer of eggs; and upon this a stratum of their mortar, seven or eight inches thick, then another layer of eggs; and in this manner one stratum upon another, nearly to the top of the nest. They lay from one hundred to two hundred eggs in a nest. These are hatched by the heat of the sun, assisted by the fermentation of the vegetable mortar in which they are deposited. The female carefully watches her own nest of eggs till they are all hatched. She then takes her brood under her care, and leads them about the shores as a hen does her chickens, and is equally courageous in defending them in time of danger. When she lies basking on the warm banks with her brood around her, the young ones may be heard whining and crying in the manner of young infants. The old feed on the young alligators till they get so large that they cannot make a prey of them; so that fortunately but few of the brood survive the age of a year. They are fond of the flesh of dogs and hogs, which they devour whenever they have an opportunity. Their principal food is fish. They retire into their dens, which they form by burrowing far into the ground, commencing under water, and working upwards, and there remain in a torpid state during the winter. The carrion vulture also destroys multitudes of young alligators, which would otherwise render the country uninhabitable.

Much has been said of the *crocodile lacrymæ*, or deceitful tears. Returned to my boat and departed, I carefully watched to discover whether the melancholy cries of my young alligators were accompanied with tears. I can assert they are not—nor does any moisture whatever fill the eye, though the plaints are piteous to the most distressing degree. Food appeases their distress. When they lament aloud I give them the entrails and livers of fowls, which they are most fond of, and they immediately cease. They are very vicious: they at times make a sudden snap at my fingers, and once bit the leg of my dog, since which time, he keeps at a distance from them. Perhaps he sets an example which I ought to imitate; but I am determined to rear them up, and bring them with me to England.

The Yazaus river is the next important object, and is ninety-three miles from the Grand Lake. I put into it as a

place of rest, and was not disappointed, having passed a night undisturbed, except by the complaints of my new companions, who were not entirely reconciled to their abode.

The Yazaus is on the eastern or left hand side of the Mississippi, going down. It is a very beautiful river. It rises in the country of the Chickassaws, runs through the state of Georgia, and falls into the Mississippi in a S. by W. direction; computed to be four hundred miles from New Orleans; it is navigable but one hundred miles upwards.

Thirteen miles below the Yazaus speculation or river, are the Walnut Hill and Fort M'Henry.—The Walnut Hill is without exception the most beautiful eminence on the Mississippi, or perhaps on any other river. It is on the east side, commanding an extensive land and water view of several miles in every direction. In the time of the Spaniards the fort was mounted with guns, manned, and kept in repair; and there were houses for the accommodation of the men, officers, and commandant. At present the public institutions are in ruins, and the whole place is occupied by but five or six settlers, who cultivate cotton, indigo, wheat, and Indian corn. The settlers are wealthy, keep a number of negro slaves each, and appear content with their situation, though they are every man, woman, and child, in a wretched state of health. And if the Walnut Hill be not healthy, every other part of the Mississippi must in truth and of necessity be indisputably unwholesome and bad. Fruit comes to great perfection at the hill, and fig trees introduced by the Spaniards grow to great excellence and height. The soil is as rich as that of the best garden about London. The hill in the rear is bounded by a swamp.

From the Walnut Hill to the Grand Gulph is a distance of forty-eight miles. I arrived in its vicinity towards evening, but was deterred from passing it till morning, in consequence of the frightful reports often made to me respecting its difficulty, and the many boats it annually swallows up. I put up within hearing of its ripple, and was again interrupted by the cries of crocodiles, and the *deep toned* sighs they emit. I should tell you that my own little ones thrive well, and take on all the airs of a pet. They take their food out of my hand, and by their voice express much satisfaction whenever they are bathed. There is little doubt but that they will survive.

Early in the morning I explored the passage of the Grand Gulph in my canoe. The river is more than a mile

wide. The channel occupies the centre, and the sides consist of two immense gulphs, which contract the channel to a very diminutive space,—not four feet broader than an ordinary boat. It must be passed notwithstanding. Stimulated by this necessity, I returned to my boat, and steered her for the gulph, in a stream of extraordinary impetuosity and strength. In a few moments I run into the main channel, and held it secure by the dint of steering and rowing, while I saw several large trees and logs sucked into the vortex on either side, whirled round and round, and drawn to the bottom. At one instant the stern of the boat swung into the eddy of the gulph! The power of the oars restored her to the channel, and twenty minutes placed us in *safe* water, and a more gentle current. It is by far the most dangerous part of the Mississippi, and is full of hazards, which can never be pointed out or described.

The hospitable and comfortable residence of Col. Bruin is at Payeu Pierre, eleven miles below the Grand Gulph. The colonel, to whom I had a letter from his friend Burr, received me with very great kindness and cordiality, and I spent a pleasant afternoon at his house. There is no settlement so extensive as the colonel's above him on the river. He keeps one hundred negroes, and makes by their labour ten thousand dollars a year. He principally cultivates cotton. The wheat, corn, &c. which he raises are only for his domestic use. There is a settlement on the east side, just above colonel Bruin's, occupied by about twenty New England families, which is also doing well. They raise great quantities of cotton, and make some portion of it into thread, which they manufacture into cotton cloth, and sell for a dollar per yard. On the whole, I was glad to see an appearance of civilization and industry, and I understood from the colonel, that from his house to New Orleans, settlements and villages, at very short intervals, are to be found. Nine miles from the colonel's is the "Petite Gulph," the navigation of which requires nearly as much attention as the Grand Gulph; and twenty-seven miles below is the city of Natchez.

LETTER XXXIX.

Natchez City—Its Trade and Luxury—Territory of the Mississippi—Natchez Indians—Their Adorations.

City of Natchez, Mississippi Territory, October, 1806.

THIS city is pleasantly situated on a considerable eminence on the east side of the river. It contains about three hundred houses, and two thousand five hundred inhabitants, including blacks, who are very numerous. There is a printing-office, and several very extensive mercantile stores. There is also a Roman catholic church, but the Americans have stripped it of its Spanish possessions, shut up the church, and have not yet erected one of their own. There is a great number of mechanics in the city, whose wages are very high, as is labour of every kind. The market is proportionably extravagant. Every article, except venison and game, is as dear as in London. The citizens, however, are enabled to endure the high price of provisions, by their trade between New Orleans and the back and upper country.

Cotton is cultivated in the neighbourhood to such perfection, and with such advantages, that many of the citizens have been induced to purchase farms, and turn all their attention to rearing and preparing that article for exportation. Their profit is so considerable, that both in town and country they live in the style of eastern luxury. I dined in several places where the dinner consisted of three courses and a dessert, where the service was of solid plate, where a negro magnificently dressed stood behind every chair, and where the air was kept in circulation by little girls employed in pulling variegated fans suspended from the centre of the room. At one of those houses of sumptuous entertainment, the proprietor informed me that his crop of cotton of that year was estimated at forty thousand dollars. There many of the cotton plantations yield from five thousand to twenty thousand dollars a year. The owners indulge in every luxury, and set an example of dissipation which at this moment pervades the city and territory. The vice of the Natchez is proverbial through America. But dreadfully are the wretched citizens to suffer for their profligacy and licentious-

ness. A confirmed and hereditary venereal disease, contracted by an unrestrained intercourse with Africans, Indians, and Mestizoes, has established its malignant empire in the city, and several other parts of the territory; and all the arts of medicine have hitherto proved unequal to counteract its effects, or to restrain its progress.—Therefore, when I tell you of people living in the most affluent profusion, you are not to encourage a belief that they are happy. In the midst of that profusion, at the very table loaded with delicacies, and provided with a variety of the richest wine, I have seen appetite wanted, and the seeds of debility and the clouds of disease casting a gloom over every countenance, and sallow in every face. Blinded by the prospect of speedy acquirements of wealth, persons come to this place, without considering that it is unhealthy to a dangerous excess; on making the discovery, the passion for riches subdues the terrors of disease, and they remain exanimate for a time, or fall early victims to their avarice and imprudence. Notwithstanding the prevalence of sickness through the territory, there are not wanting persons to recommend it as "the most benign and healthy climate in the world."

The principal persons of wealth send their children for instruction, and to avoid such pestilence, to the New England states—a distance of three thousand miles. There is an academy here, but it is much neglected. Gambling and horse-racing are the prevailing amusements. In winter there are balls and concerts—I cannot say how elegant or chaste, not having seen many of the ladies by whom they are frequented, they, for the most part, being at their summer residences scattered around the city. The men drink profusely. It is difficult to escape from their parties under three bottles of wine a man.

The territory of the Mississippi is of the following general description:

Miles.		
Length 384	Between	31° and 32° 23′ N. Lat.
Breadth 100		9° 52′ and 16° 20′ W. Long.

Bounded north by a line running due east from the mouth of the Yazaus river, at its junction with the Mississippi, to the Chatahoocha or Appalachicola river: east by this last mentioned river; south, by the 31° of north latitude; (which is the boundary between the United States and West Florida); and west, by the river Mississippi, which separates it from Louisiana.

This territory is well watered by a number of small rivers and their branches, and several large streams which mostly run through its whole extent.

The Black, or Little Yazaus, empties into the Mississippi, about fifty miles below the Walnut Hills, near the south side of the Great Yazaus.

Stony Creek, or Bia Pierre, and Cole's Creek, empty into the Mississippi: the former ten miles below Black River, and the latter twenty-five miles above the Natchez.

Hamichitta and Buffalo, near Loftus's Heights, are the most southern waters in this territory that empty into the Mississippi.

Amité rises in about the thirty-third degree in north latitude, and pursuing a southerly course, empties into Lake Pontchartrain, being a part of what was formerly called Iberville.

Pearl extends through the whole territory from north to south, and discharges itself near the entrance of Pontchartrain.

Pascagoola has its source near the northern parts of the territory, and empties into the bay or Gulph of Mexico.

Mobile, or Tombeckbe, is a very considerable river, whose source is about the 35° of north latitude. It abounds with numerous branches, watering fine intervals of land, where the Chickassaw Indians have many towns. About sixty-five miles from the boundary line up the Mobile, are Walker's shoals, the head of tide water.

Alibama, or Tallapoosa, is a considerable river, and unites with the Mobile about ten miles north of the line, and receives the waters of the Abacoocha or Cohawba, whose sources interlock with the waters of Tenessee.

Escambia and Concugh, or Pensacola rivers, which unite in West Florida, empty into the bay of Pensacola.

Chatahoocha, or Appalachicola, takes its rise at the foot of the great range of mountains in the north-east part of Georgia.

The whole territory is low and flat, interspersed, however, with rising grounds, at some distance from the rivers, which are generally bounded by swamps and cane grounds. These, together with numerous ponds, lakes, and marshes, render the climate unhealthy. In the months of August, September, and October, the fevers become predominant and contagious. The soil is sandy. The chief productions are cotton, rice, Indian corn, and indigo. The produce of these

is abundant and of high quality. The culture of indigo is nearly renounced. After several years of sad experience, the planters at length found out, that, on an average, it killed every negro employed in its culture in the short space of five years. Notwithstanding this monstrous discovery, there are still a few who pursue the murderous traffic. The poor slaves they employ are reduced to mere skeletons, and exhibit the number of their days in a poisoned aspect, and the melancholy expression of languor and debility which mark their countenance and frame. So well assured are the indigo planters of the number of days their slaves have to live, that it is a common practice with them to send them to New Orleans market for sale, before the expiration of the average period of five years, and there buy new wretches to undergo the same toil, and be destined the same short space to live. But it is now so generally understood at New Orleans, and elsewhere, that indigo slaves have the fountain of life irrevocably corrupted, that little or no price can be obtained for them, and for the future it is probable they will be permitted to die on the spot where they are poisoned, without being exposed to the degradation of being dragged through the country, and put up to sale at public auction before an insulting and unfeeling multitude.

I took a ride into the interior to visit the remains of the nation of the Natchez Indians, once the most powerful and enlightened people of all the continent of America. Their tradition says, they came from South America, and indeed their habits, customs, and manners, say the same thing. They are now reduced to a few hundreds. When the Anglo-Americans first became acquainted with them, they courted their alliance, and dreaded their enmity more than that of any other tribe. The ravage of war, the small-pox, and spirituous liquors, have since reduced their number and character, and they are now slighted and despised. I shall only remark them for one particular: they are nations of Indians east of the Mississippi, who worship the sun, and who used to offer to that luminary human sacrifices, which they consumed in fires, attended by priests, whose office it was to renew and keep them up perpetually. Human sacrifice being forbidden by the United States, the Indians now make offerings of the most valuable articles, and often burn property to some thousand dollars amount. Their manner is, on the adoration-day to assemble round the eternal fire, as they call it, light a calumet, and present it to the sun. Then certain persons, called Children of the Sun, cast the sacrifice

into the fire, and while it consumes, the warriors, and young men, women, and children, in separate circles, dance and sing around. Missionaries and others strive to turn them from this destructive kind of devotion, but all in vain: they still persist, and on the day answering to our first of May, in particular, they are known to destroy nearly all the property they possess, and which they acquire by hunting and trading with the States.

It is not true, that their fires are constantly alive. Several years have elapsed since they were suffered to extinguish. They are now only illumined on particular festivals and state days. On my arrival at their village on a western branch of the Alibama, I made very minute inquiries on the subject; but could gather no information more interesting than what I communicated to you from the Mouth of the Ozark.

Every thing which surpasses the understanding and capacity, every thing whose cause cannot be comprehended by Indians, is called by them "Spirit." There are two orders of Spirits: the good and the bad. The good is the Spirit of Dreams, and all things innocent and inconceivable. The bad is the thunder, the hail which destroys their corn, a tempest, and in short all things capable of inflicting distress and injury, and the cause of which they are not acquainted with. Hence, when the gun of a savage bursts and wounds him, he says the Evil Spirit was confined within it; when a tree falls and hurts a limb, he attributes the act to the Evil Spirit; when crossing the river in his canoe, and upset by the wind, he thinks the Evil Spirit agitates the air and raises the storm; when one of his tribe is deprived of reason by a shock of sickness, or dispensation of Heaven, he says the Evil Spirit torments him. Several nations call the Good Spirits Michi Lichi; and the bad ones Matchi Manitous. And *one* superior Good Spirit, they call by way of distinction and eminence Kilchi Manitou, or Great Unknown Spirit; and *one* superior Bad Spirit, is called Matchi Manitou, or Wicked Being. From a system like this, the number of Good and Evil Spirits must be innumerable, and the objects of love and apprehension beyond all bounds.

The Choctaw Indians inhabit the western, and the lower creeks the eastern part of this territory; and the Muscogees inhabit from the Chatahoocha to the Alibama, and extend into West Florida. These tribes of Indians are more numerous than any other east of the Mississippi, and are re-

markable for their aversion and contempt to the people of the United States, and the hostile disposition they manifest towards them on every occasion that presents. I would have visited these nations were it not for the advance of the season.—I therefore returned to this city, which I leave to-morrow by dawn.

The river here is about one mile and a quarter broad; and as the city is advantageously seated on a bank one hundred feet above low water mark, the view from it is delightful. The waters begin to rise in April, and subside in August, overflowing the grounds for many miles on each side; the western side being the lowest, the inundations there extend forty or fifty miles.—There is a fort here as well as at the Walnut Hills, and one at Loftus's Heights, about seven miles above the boundary line, and another at Bond's Bluff and St. Stephen's; these two last are in the Mobile river.

LETTER XL.

Fort Adams—General Wilkinson—Riviere Rouge—Several Settlements, with their Trade and Produce—Chaffalis Bayeau—Tunica Bayeau and Villages—Point Coupee Church—A rich Settlement—Bayeau Sacra—Thompson's Creek—Baton Rouge—Bayeau Manchee—Bayeau de la Fourche—Alacapas and Opelousas Settlements—Fine Breed of Horses and Cattle—Healthy Climate—Sugar Plantations—Bona Cara Settlement—Account of the River from New Orleans to the Sea.

Bona Cara, Mississippi Bank, November, 1806.

I HAD not left the Natchez many hours before I found a sensible improvement in the river: the current preserving the centre and the sides free of snags, sawyers, and rocks. This appearance was very pleasing, as it dispensed with labour and attention, and shewed it practicable to float all night, a thing entirely rash to attempt after leaving the Ohio.

The first object that attracts notice is the white cliffs on the east side, and which are thirty-nine miles from the Natchez; the second, the mouth of the Homochello river, on

the same side; and the third, Loftus's Heights and Fort Adams, also on the east side. The fort is garrisoned. General Wilkinson is at present there, collecting troops to drive the Spaniards beyond the Louisiana line, from limits of which the domains of the United States would extend to the Florida gulph and the isthmus of Dawen.

General Wilkinson is also a governor of the Upper Louisiana, though contrary to a law of the State, which says, "that functions civil and military are not to be vested in any one person, or in any one place."

The regular force under general Wilkinson does not exceed one thousand men. In case of necessity, he has the militia of the Natchez, Orleans, Finassee, and Kentuckey, to call out. He proposes shortly to leave Fort Adams, and to stretch the American boundary to its utmost extent.

Five miles below Fort Adams is the line of demarkation, struck before the purchase between Spain and the United States. It is in latitude 31 north, and ten miles below that line on the west side is Red river, or Riviere Rouge.

This river derives its name from the colour of its water, which is perpetually red or reddish. It mixes with the Mississippi with great reluctance, and is seen in blotches and in a separate current for a considerable extent. On the banks, and in the vicinity of the Red river, are the rich settlements of Rapide, Avoyellos, and Natchiloches, all thriving and populous. The latter is situated seventy-five leagues up the Red river. On the north side of the Red river, a few leagues from its junction with the Mississippi, is the Black river, on one of whose branches, a considerable way up, is the infant settlement of Ouachita, which, from the great richness of the soil, may be made a place of importance. Cotton is the chief produce of these settlements; but they have likewise a considerable fur or Indian trade. The Red river communicates with the frontiers of North Mexico.

On a retrospect, there is no other settlement on the west side of the Mississippi, above the Red river, till you come to the mouth of the Orkansas, seven hundred and fifty miles from New Orleans, and there, as I observed, there are but few families, who are more attached to the Indian trade (by which they chiefly live) than to cultivation. Nor is there any settlement from the Orkansas to New Madrid, which is in itself considerable; and from New Madrid there is none till you reach Cape Guardeau, above the mouth of the Ohio.

Below the Red river, five miles, is one of the most dangerous bayeaus on the Mississippi; it is called Chaffalis, and to avoid being sucked into its vortex, it is absolutely necessary to keep the middle of the river, and to row with great force.

Several islands occur between the Chaffalis and the bayeau Tunica, a distance of forty-six miles, and the Tunica villages are ten miles from the bayeau, and are seated on the east side.

A little above these villages, the Mississippi forms almost a complete circle, leaving a narrow peninsula of about one mile and a half across, which if cut through, a distance of about thirty miles would be saved. The cut could be made for a mere trifling expence, there not being a single stone or a morsel of clay on the entire course.

On the west side, twelve miles below the Tunica villages, is Point Coupee church. It is one hundred and fifty miles from New Orleans, and is the commencement of the richest and best settlement on the river, along which it extends eight leagues. Its produce is cotton. Behind it, on an old bed of the river, now a lake, whose outlets are closed up, is the settlement of Fausse Riviere, which is populous and well cultivated. From this settlement to the sea are contained three-fourths of the population, and seven-eighths of the riches of all Louisiana.

From Coupee church to Cape Guardeau, above the mouth of the Ohio, there is no land on the west side that is not overflowed in the spring, to the distance of eight or ten leagues from the river, with from two to twelve feet water, except the small prairie at New Madrid; so that in the whole extent of near nine hundred miles, there is no possibility of forming a considerable settlement contiguous to the river on that side. The eastern bank has in this respect a decided advantage over the western, as there are on it many situations which effectually command the river.

Bayeau Sara lies fifteen miles below Point Coupee church. This stream is on the east side, and about nine miles up it is a very fine settlement, in which resides a Mr. Bradford, formerly of Washington, Pennsylvania, a gentleman of immense possessions, and an intelligent worthy character.

Point Coupee is on the west side, five miles below bayeau Sara. Thompson's Creek is on the east side, three miles below Point Coupee. On this creek are fine cotton plantations, the soil of which is remarkably good.

Baton Rouge is thirty miles lower down, and bayeau Manchee fifteen.

Baton Rouge is remarkable as being the first place where the high land is contiguous to the river, and there it forms a bluff from thirty to forty feet above the greatest rise of the water. There also the settlements extend a considerable way back on the east side. The parish of Baton Rouge has that of Thompson's Creek and bayeau Sara subordinate to it. The mouth of the first of these creeks is about forty-five leagues from New Orleans, and that of the latter two or three higher up. They run from north-east to south-west, and their head waters are north of the 31st degree of latitude. Their banks have the best soil, and the greatest number of rich cotton plantations of any part of Louisiana, and of which they are universally allowed to be the garden.

Immediately above the Iberville, and on both sides of the Mississippi, lies the parish of Manchee, which extends four leagues on the river, and is highly cultivated.

Bayeau de la Fourche is on the west side, thirteen miles from Manchee, and four from the settlement of one Baillie, a rich and noted cotton planter.

The creek, or bayeau de la Fourche, is about twenty-five leagues from New Orleans. In old maps it is called la Riviere des Chitamachés. It flows from the Mississippi, and communicates with the sea to the westward of the Balise. The settlers on the banks talk of deepening the mouth of the Fourche, and of turning the whole volume of the Mississippi into it, thereby to enrich their country to the sea, to the entire ruin of New Orleans and all the settlements along the river's banks below the Fourche. The entrance of the Fourche is navigable only at high water, but will then admit of craft of from sixty to seventy tons burthen. On both banks of this creek are settlements, one plantation deep, for fifteen leagues, and they are divided into two parishes. The settlers are numerous, and the culture is universally cotton. On all creeks making from the Mississippi, the soil is the same as on the bank of the river, and the border is the highest part of it, from whence it descends gradually to a swamp. In no place is there depth on the low lands more than suffices for one plantation, before you come to grounds too low for cultivation.

This creek affords one of the communications to the two populous and rich settlements of Alacapas and Opelousas, formed on and near the small rivers Tiche and Vermilion, which flow into the bay of Mexico. But the principal and

swiftest communication is by the bayeau or the creek of Plaquemines, whose entrance into the Mississippi is seven leagues higher up on the same side, and thirty-two above New Orleans. These settlements abound in cattle and horses, have a large quantity of good land in their vicinity, and are likely to become of vast importance. A part of their produce is sent by sea to New Orleans, but the greatest part is carried in bateaux by the creeks I have mentioned. The Opelousas is remarkable for a breed of horses and cattle not to be excelled in the world, and yet any quantity may be bought up for only a guinea a head. In the time of the Spaniards, one dollar was the price of a horse, and half a dollar for an ox or cow! The country is for ever under verdure; the climate moist, but serene. I have seen more healthy and strong individuals come from it after a residence of several years, than I ever met with on the Ohio or Mississippi. The inhabitants live in a genuine primitive way: they do little else than tend flocks. I am assured, from the best authority, that there is not such a country in all America as the Opelousas. I am fully inclined to believe this. It is the first high ground between Louisiana and North Mexico. I am sorry I have not leisure to visit it.

Between the Fourche and Bona Cara, from whence I write, I passed by Arnold's and Baronges', two eminent sugar plantations. The seat of Baronges is the handsomest on the river. It is eleven miles from the Fourche, and on the east side below it, is Cartrelle church. Very little sugar is cultivated above Arnold's, nor are orange-groves common higher up; therefore, on approaching his house and settlement, the country assumes new features, and the frigid character of North America is disguised under the drapery of the West Indies.

The settlement of Bona Cara is very delightful; it has a neat church, and the houses which strike from it, up and down the river, are also separated by plantations and orange-groves. The following places lie between it and New Orleans, in the space of forty-eight miles: Red church on the east side; Forteus's sugar plantations and the orange-grove, which is but three miles above New Orleans.

Before I proceed to an account of New Orleans, I shall conclude the description of the river from that city to the sea, from authority on which you may confidently rely.

The conspicuous places are, the English Bend; Fort Plaquemines and the Passes; and the mouths of the Mississippi; the latter of which are in lat. 29° 6″ north.

On the east side, about five leagues below New Orleans and at the head of the English Bend, is a settlement known by the name of the Poblacion de St. Bernando, or the Terre aux Beaufs, extending on both sides of a creek or chain, whose head is contiguous to the Mississippi, and which flowing eastward, after a course of eighteen leagues, and dividing itself into two branches, falls into the sea and Lake Borgne. This settlement consists of two parishes, almost all the inhabitants of which are Spaniards from the Canaries, who content themselves with raising fowls, corn, and vegetables, for the market of New Orleans. The lands cannot be cultivated to any great distance from the banks of the creek, on account of the vicinity of the marsh behind them; but the place is susceptible of great improvement, and of affording another communication for small craft, from eight to ten feet draught, between the sea and the Mississippi.

The settlements below the English Bend, or from sixteen leagues from New Orleans, are of no importance. Between them and the Fort of Placquemines, the country is overflowed in the spring, and in many places is incapable of cultivation at any time, being a morass, almost impassable by man or beast. This small tongue of land extends considerably into the sea, which is visible on both sides of the Mississippi from a ship's mast.

From Placquemines to the sea is twelve or thirteen leagues. The country is low, swampy, chiefly covered with reeds, having little or no timber, and no settlement whatever. The whole lower part of the country, even from the English Bend downward, is subject to overflow in hurricanes, either by the recoiling of the river, or reflux of the sea on each side; and, on more than one occasion, it has been covered from the depth of two to ten feet, according to the descent of the river, whereby many lives were lost, horses and cattle swept away, and a dreadful scene of destruction laid. The last calamity of this kind happened in 1794; and in the preceding year the engineer who superintended the construction of the Fort Placquemines, was drowned in his house near the fort, and the workmen and garrison escaped only by taking refuge on an elevated spot in the fort, on which there were notwithstanding three feet water. These hurricanes have generally been felt in the month of August. Their greatest fury lasts about twelve hours. They commence in the south east; veer about to all points of the compass, are felt more severely below, and seldom extend more than a few leagues above New Orleans. In their

whole course they are marked with ruin and desolation. They are not very frequent: until that of 1793, there had been none felt from the year 1780.

About eight leagues below the Placquemines, the Mississippi divides itself into the channels, viz. the east, south, and south-west. Their course is from five to six leagues to the sea. The space between is a marsh, with little or no timber in it; but from its situation it may hereafter be rendered of importance. The east pass, which is on the left hand going down the river, is divided into two branches about two leagues below, viz. the Pass a la Lantre, and that known by the name of the Balize, at which there is a small block-house, and huts for the accommodation of pilots. The first of these secondary channels contains at present but eight feet water; the latter from twelve to sixteen, according to the seasons. The south pass, which is directly in front of the Mississippi, has always been considered as entirely choaked up; it has ten feet water. The south-west pass, which is on the right, is the longest and narrowest of all the passes, and a few years ago had eighteen feet water; and was that by which the large ships always entered and sailed from the Mississippi. It has now but eight feet water, and will probably decline in depth still more. In speaking of the quantity of water in the passes, it must be understood of what is on the bar of each pass, for immediately after passing the bar, which is very narrow, there are from five to seven fathoms at all seasons.

Ships bound for the Mississippi must strive to keep exactly in the latitude of its mouth, as the land is not to be seen at the distance of five leagues; they must bring the block-house to bear W. N. W. three degrees north, and run direct for it. When in, and bound up, the safest method is to run from point to point before a leading wind, taking care to keep out of the bends. When obliged to anchor, ships should come to on the close of a point. As may well be expected, the mouths of the river present a frightful sight. Wrecks of vessels, and piles of timber fastened in the bars, are seen by the mariner before he can see the land! and he finds himself in ten fathoms water before he can make the log-house or any manner of guide! Few vessels come up the river without the loss of an anchor. From the mouth to New Orleans, a distance of one hundred miles, vessels have been known six and eight weeks on the passage, stemming the current, or waiting a favourable wind. It seldom occupies more than two days in the descent.

To return. Of the settlements of Chapitoulas, first and

second German coasts, Catahanose, Fourche, and Iberville, the best and most improved are above the city of New Orleans; and comprehend, what is there known by the Parisse de Chapitoulas, Premier and second Côtes des Allemandes, extending sixteen leagues. Above these begins the parish of Catahanose, or first Acadian settlement, of eight leagues extent; adjoining which, and still ascending, are the second Acadian settlement, or parish of the Fourche, extending about six leagues. The parish of Iberville then commences, and is bounded by a river of the same name, which, though dry a great part of the year, yet, when the Mississippi is raised, it communicates with the Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain, and through them with the sea, and thus forms what is called the island of New Orleans.

Before I conclude, I shall take a rapid retrospect of my proceedings since I left the Natchez. The voyage hither consumed eight days; had I had leisure, I would readily have allowed it to employ an entire year. It is perhaps the most interesting stretch of fresh water navigation in the world, and the most abounding in objects calculated to extend the information and gratify the senses. Except from the point just below the Iberville, the country to New Orleans is settled the whole way along the river, and presents a scene of uninterrupted plantations in sight of each other, whose parts to the Mississippi are all cleared, and occupy on that river from five to twenty-five acres, with a depth of forty; so that a plantation of five acres front, contains two hundred. A few sugar plantations are formed in the parish of Catahanose, but the remainder are devoted to cotton and provisions; and the whole is an excellent soil, incapable of being exhausted. The plantations are but one deep on the island of New Orleans, and on the opposite side of the river as far as the mouth of the Iberville, which is thirty-five leagues above New Orleans.

Every parish from Baton Rouge down, has a church, on which a cross, that sacred emblem of Christianity, glitters from the top of a spire, which raises its picturesque head above the summit of walnut, magnolia, and cypress trees. The houses of a parish, which are built with all the embellishments of the French, in the West-India style, are not crowded together, but are separated by groves and gardens, which give them a charming effect, and an extent to one settlement of several miles. The inhabitants, who, for the most part are French, live perfectly at their ease. To mingle piety with mirth, recreation with labour, and activity

with repose; is the only object they pursue; and this they attain to a perfection unknown to any other people with whom I am acquainted.

The navigation being good between the Natchez and New Orleans, I had no apprehension of leaving my boat in charge of the two men, and taking my canoe ashore for hours together. On going to the habitations of the planters or settlers, I always experienced the most hospitable and kind reception; and uniformly, on offering to pay for milk, fruit, and vegetables, the answer was, "*N'importe monsieur, cela ne vaut rien.*" The Spaniards are retiring fast into Mexico. There are not a dozen respectable Spanish families above New Orleans; those who submit, reside below that city, and are of the lowest order, otherwise they also would ere this have departed.

After a passage of such length and solitude, I can never describe to you the pleasure that is experienced on arriving in that part of the Mississippi, where the sounds of population strike the ear, where a hearty welcome is always experienced, where danger is no longer thought of, and where information is readily procured. I often continued floating along shore in the evening, hearkening to the distant tones of the village bells, to the herds lowing on their pasture, to the watchful dog guarding the premises of his master, to the cheerful song chaunted by content and innocence, to the conversation of love and friendship, to the whistle of the vacant mind, and the long loud laugh of content and happiness. And on going ashore and walking up to a neat white house, nearly intercepted by groves of oranges, I have been greeted by the family, seated out of doors, with, "*Ah! bien venue, monsieur l'etranger; prenez une chaise si vous plait: vous n'avez pas soupez; ma femme, faire apprete quelque chose pour monsieur; mes enfans, allez voir le bateau de monsieur; ayez soin que c'est bien attaché, et menez ses gens qu'ils ont quelque chose à manger.*" In this manner have the good people gone on where I have stopt, and on my departure, all I was ever permitted to do, was *de donner un petit present aux enfans*, and in some families even that was not allowed, as you may judge, when they possessed from five to twenty thousand dollars a year. Along the river from *Baton Rouge* to New Orleans, float between one thousand and thirty thousand dollars annually. The local manner of calculating wealth is very singular: it is said, such a man is worth ten negroes a year, and another one hundred; and it is understood to a dollar, to how much

the income amounts. One negro can cultivate two acres of cotton, the produce of which is two hundred dollars: the deduction from which ratio is, that he who has ten negroes is worth two thousand dollars per annum; and he who has one hundred is worth twenty thousand. The sugar is very abundant and profitable. Much to the credit of the French settlers, they have abandoned the cultivation of indigo from principles of humanity. It is now confined to Americans. The inhabitants of the river banks enjoy a tolerable state of health. Those who live temperate look strong and hearty.

There are no markets at any of the villages or parishes. Every settler provides his own family. His grounds abound with stock; the woods with game; and the river with fish. Where is the necessity of a market? The river, also, at certain seasons is covered with water-fowls; and all the summer, duck and pelican. The river, too, has inhabitants not so desirable. It swarms with alligators of extraordinary ferocity and force. The French believe that they have a decided predilection for negro flesh. This idea prevails so much, that negroes dare not venture into the water; and a fact is now current which gives strength to this prejudice. Two men, one black and the other white, had occasion to go into the water to endeavour to push off a boat which had got fast on a bar. An alligator attacked the African, and drew him under water by the leg; he extricated himself, rose, and rushed to the boat, over the side of which he was clambering, assisted by the white, when the alligator renewed the combat, again drew him off by the leg he had before mangled, and crushed his bones in the presence of the white man, whom he neither attacked nor regarded.

LETTER XLI.

New Orleans—Particulars of this important City, and its Environs—New Madrid, an intended City, on an excellent and salubrious Situation.

New Orleans, Lat. 30. 2. *North.*
Lon. 90. *West. Nov.* 1806.

I HAVE at length arrived at this very important and flourishing city, the interesting particulars of which I shall communicate according as they strike my attention during my stay.

It is the capital of Louisiana, a country of immense extent, bounded by the Mississippi, east; by the Gulph of Mexico, south; by New Mexico, west; and runs indefinitely north.

By referring to the maps, to my own experience, and examining the position of Louisiana, it appears that the lower part projects considerably into the sea. It has in all probability been formed by the sediment brought down by the current, and deposited on the flat coast. There is, therefore, on the east but a very narrow slip along the bank of the river from the sea to the Iberville. The land is not generally susceptible of cultivation more than a mile back from the river, the rest is low and swampy to the lakes and the sea, and abounds with cypress, which is often cut down, and sawed by mills that are worked by artificial streams from the Mississippi in the time of floods, which often continue five months in the year. What I observe of the east, equally applies to the west side of the river. The soil and situation are nearly the same. After leaving the bank of the river, there is an immense swamp intersected by creeks and lakes, extending to the high land of Alacapas, and occupying a space of forty leagues.

In a country such as this, on the east bank of the Mississippi, one hundred miles from the Balize, is seated the city of New Orleans. It extends nearly a mile along the river, from the gate of France, on the south, to that of Chapitoulas above, and is a little more than one-third of a mile in breadth from the river to the rampart; but there is an extensive suburb on the upper side. The houses in front of the town, and for a square backwards, are mostly of brick, co-

vered with slate or tile; the remainder are of wood, covered with shingles. They run cross each other at right angles, and are thirty-two French feet wide. The squares between the intersections of the streets have a front of three hundred French feet. There is in the middle of the front of the city, a square, or *place des armes*, facing which the church and town-house are built. There are about fifteen hundred houses in the city and suburbs. The population may be estimated at fifteen thousand, including the garrison and Africans. It was fortified in 1793; but the works being originally defective, could not be defended, and are now in ruins. The powder magazine is on the opposite bank of the river. In the city there are twelve public structures. The church, town-house, jail, convent, bank, theatre, and governor's palace, would, in any country, be esteemed large and handsome buildings. The front, or side next the river, is open, and is secured from the inundations by a raised bank, called the levée, which extends from fifteen miles below the city to fifty miles above it, forming a good road all the way. The city is considerably under the level of high water, in consequence of which, and the swampy nature of the ground on which it is built, there can be no subterraneous building. Where they have been attempted, they have uniformly fallen in and filled with water. Most of the houses have open galleries, and gardens abounding with flowering shrubs and rich bearing orange trees. These give the city a cool and lively appearance, and convey to my mind very pleasurable sensations, after a voyage so destitute of the comforts and elegancies of life as I lately experienced.

Immediately behind the city is a canal, about a mile and a half long, called the Canal of Carondelet, which communicates with a creek, called the Bayeau St. Jean, flowing into Lake Pontchartrain. At the head of the bayeau is a handsome village, and at the mouth, about eight miles from the city, is the small fort of St. Jean, which commands the entrance from the lake. By this bayeau the communication is kept up through the lake and the Rigolets to the Mobile and settlements in West Florida. Craft drawing from six to eight feet water, can navigate to the mouth of the creek; but, except in particular swells of the lake, cannot pass the bar without being lightened.

On the road from the city to the road bayeau are several beautiful country seats and rich gardens. The banks of the river on the east side, as far down as the English Bend, and

as high up as Bona Cara, are also embellished with neat country residences, whither the citizens retire during the sickly season, which happens between the months of August and November.

From the favourableness of the climate of the Lower Louisiana, especially as low down as the city, two crops of Indian corn may be annually produced; and the soil, with little cultivation, would furnish grain of every kind in abundance. The timber is as fine as any in the world; and the quantities of oak, ash, mulberry, walnut, cherry, cypress, and cedar, are astonishing. The banks of the Mississippi, besides, furnish the richest fruits in variety; and the soil is particularly adapted for hemp, flax, and tobacco: indigo yields the planter three or four cuttings a year. In a word, whatever is rich and rare in the most desirable climates in Europe seems to be the spontaneous production of the neighbourhood of this city, and of the country in general. Oranges thrive to the highest perfection, and mulberry, locust, sassafras, hickory, dog-wood, &c. are the most abundant natives of the soil. Grape-vines run up almost every tree, and yield a red wine of a very tolerable quality. The game of the savannahs and woods is not yet destroyed, and the Mississippi and the neighbouring lakes furnish, in great plenty, several sorts of fish, particularly perch, pike, cat, buffalo, sturgeon, and eels.

Accounts similar to this, perhaps higher coloured and still true, lead thousands into this country in search of a paradise, and they find a grave. The climate is horrid. On an average nine strangers die out of ten, shortly after their arrival in the city, and those who survive are of shattered constitution and debilitated frame.

The entire country is not subject to malignant disease. It is generated by the lakes, swamps, and marshes, contiguous to the sea, and gradually diffuses itself up the river, till checked by high lands and a higher latitude. It merely glances over the habitations of the settlers, whom it slightly attacks, and tarries only in Orleans and the Natchez, where an overflowing population, and the various circumstances incident to cities, which favour disease, render it powerful and contagious.

The present partial population and wealth of the country is to be attributed to the flattering accounts disseminated by interested individuals, of its climate, riches, and general productions. The first intention of settling New Madrid, that vile, wretched spot, which I described to you in a

former letter, was announced to the public in these terms, by colonel Morgan, a Kentuckeyan adventurer :

In a country abounding with the richest productions of nature, and enjoying the most wholesome climate known to the world, a *city* is about to be established, under the immediate sanction and patronage of the king of Spain; who, to encourage settlers purchasing town-lots, will grant lands in any quantity, and of the most superior kind, at the rate of sixpence per acre.

In honour to his majesty, the city is to be named New Madrid, after the capital of his European possessions, and is to extend four miles south and two miles west from the Mississippi; so as to cross a beautiful, living, deep lake, of the purest spring water, one hundred yards wide and several miles in length, emptying itself by a constant and rapid narrow stream through the centre of the city; the banks of the lake, called St. Annis, high and delightful; the water deep, clear, and sweet, and well stored with fish. On each side of this unparalleled lake streets are to be laid out, one hundred feet wide; a road to be continued round it of the same breadth; and the streets are directed to be preserved for ever, for the health and pleasure of the citizens. A street one hundred and twenty feet wide is to be laid out on the banks of the Mississippi, and the trees now ornamenting it are to be preserved for the same purpose. Twelve acres, in a central part of the city, are to be reserved in like manner, and embellished and regulated by the magistracy for public walks; forty half-acre lots for other public purposes; and one lot of twelve acres for the king's use.

As the vicinity of this city is rich beyond description, and abounding with every advantage required by man to render his life luxuriant and comfortable, there can be no doubt but that it will possess a wealthy population, especially as colonel Morgan, the proprietor under the king, is liberal in making free grants to mechanics, and intends disposing of the whole of the forty thousand city lots at a rate that will be but equal to ten dollars per acre.

LETTER XLII.

The Religion and Commerce of New Orleans.

New Orleans, November, 1806.

MY last conveyed to you general ideas of the city, and of the climate of Lower Louisiana. I confine myself now to the religion and commerce of this place.

The religion is Roman catholic: that is, the religion of the French and Spanish is catholic; as for the Americans they have none. They disregard the Sabbath entirely; or, if they go to the catholic church, there not being any other, they go as to a *spectacle*, where fine women are to be seen, and where fine music is to be heard!

The catholic church, as well as the town house, the jail, and the palace of the priests, were all built by the once celebrated merchant, don André, on condition that he should be made a noble of Spain. He lived to expend two millions of dollars on these and other public works, but died before the ambitious honours were lavished on him; and his wife has the mortification still to be called madame André.

The church is a very large structure, built of brick, and plastered and painted in front, to give it the appearance of marble.

The altar is magnificent for the western world, and is adorned with paintings and sculpture of considerable taste. —Queen Esther fainting away in the presence of Ahasuerus is fine; for though she is lost to sense and in a swoon, her majesty and beauty still remain. She is dressed in her royal robes, and as she sinks, she leans to the right side, and is supported by one of the ladies who attend her; they are six in number, elegantly dressed, and handsome. There is another lady and a youth, who do their utmost to keep the queen from falling. Her neck is bare, and her arms hang motionless; and her body is as weak and helpless as if the soul had left it: the retiring of the blood, the falling of the muscles, and the natural and graceful manner in which she dies away, are expressed with the greatest skill and propriety. The king seems surprised, and rises from his throne

with his sceptre in his hand, as giving his assistance. The persons that attend upon the king, both by their actions and countenances, appear to be under the same concern. Haman, who is the cause of this distress, stands in the presence chamber, wearing a gold collar, behind the throne, and appears to be affected, and to share in the calamity. There stands a spirited figure of an officer, in rich armour, with one of the ensigns of war in his hand; his attention seems to be taken up with what passes. At a distance are other soldiers that belong to the guard. There is a youth also near the throne, dressed in scarlet, with a white shock dog in his arms, which has a very good effect.

In the sacristy there are several relics; among which is a thorn of our Saviour's crown, tinged with his blood; a cloth of Santa Veroneca, enriched with his image, and a cross of Indian workmanship, said to have been found on the bank of the riviere Noir, on the very spot where the famous Ferdinand de Leto ended his discoveries and his life, and where his remains now lie buried. The priest who exhibited the altar and the relics, appeared much displeased with the little belief afforded them by the Americans, and informed me that orders had arrived from the bishops of Cuba and Mexico, to forward all the pictures and relics from the churches of Louisiana to New Spain, where the honours of belief and admiration in anxious solicitude await them.

Besides the church, there is another place of religious worship—A convent, for the instruction and accommodation of fifty nuns. They have a very neat chapel, where mass is celebrated twice every day, during which the nuns join in the melody of the service from a situation separated from the audience by close iron bars. I could just distinguish that they were dressed in black robes, with the same coloured veil flowing from their head to the feet. They are not allowed to take in novices; as on the death of the present nuns, the American government purpose seizing on their possessions and lands, which are very considerable both in the city and neighbourhood.

It is now time to touch on the subject of commerce.

Notwithstanding the periodical visitations which devastate the city, still I have every reason to believe that it will rival every other in America, in wealth, power, and prosperity. This belief is not founded on vague surmises, but on the following view of its situation and relative circumstances with other countries.

1. By the canal of the Carondolet, the Lake Pontchar-

train, and the Mobile, it receives the rich productions of the two Floridas and the Tenessee state.

2. All the wealth of the western parts of Pennsylvania; of the back parts of the entire of the Kentuckey and the Ohio states, and the Indiana territory, are conveyed to it by means of the Ohio and her tributaries, which flow into the Mississippi, as before described.

3. A proportion of the trade of the lakes finds its way to it by the Illinois river, and bateaux navigating below St. Anthony's Falls.

4. The furs and produce of the north west descend to it by the Messauri, and reach the city after a course of two thousand five hundred miles.

5. The property of the west has various avenues to approach it, viz. the White, the Red, and the Black rivers, the St. Francis, the Atakasses, and the bayeaus of the Fourche and others.

6. It receives various rich productions from New Mexico, through means of Indian communication, and navigable streams falling into the gulph.

From the Floridas it receives skins, logwood, dying stuff, and silver dollars; from Tenessee, and the back part of Georgia, cotton, tobacco, and other produce.

From the upper parts of the Ohio it receives provisions, timber, boats, flour, wheat, Indian corn, tobacco, and potash; and from the lower parts, that is Kentuckey and the Indiana territory, live and dead stock, timber, flour, Indian corn, iron, and pottery-ware; sassafras, ginseng, and various medicinal plants, roots and herbs; also oil of snakes, animals, and vegetables, hemp, flax, sail-cloth, cordage, twist, twine, paper, spirits manufactured in the country. Kentuckey, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, also send down their boats, sadlery, and artificers' tools made in the country.

From the lakes and the Illinois, it receives furs, dying stuffs, earths, and minerals.

From the Messauri it receives lead and furs.

From the west it receives furs, cattle, horses, and hogs.

From New Mexico it receives silver and gold for goods clandestinely introduced.

And from the Mississippi territory, and the banks of the river, where cultivated to an extent of three hundred miles up and down, it receives cotton, indigo, and sugar, and timber in bulk, and plank in great abundance.

From this it appears that the city is the depôt of all the

various wealth and productions of countries extending from it from two to three thousand miles in many directions, and as such wealth and productions must stop at the city, which contracts the navigation of the river, it is not unreasonable to assert, as I have done, that the city must flourish in spite of the diseases by which it is periodically ravaged. Beside becoming the necessary depôt of such extravagant wealth, it has strong advantages from its own situation; it stands on the very bank of the most perfect course of fresh-water navigation in the world; it is but one hundred miles from the sea, within a few days sail of Mexico, of the French, Spanish, and British islands in the West Indies, and lies open to, and trades with Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Hamburgh, United Provinces, Great Britain, Austria, Netherlands and Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Morocco, and several parts of Africa; China, and various Asiatic countries, and the north west coast of North, and the east coast of South America.

There are upwards of four hundred ships of all nations now in the river, moored three deep along the Levée.

The trade of New Orleans has undergone an entire change since the soil of Louisiana became the property of the states. Before that period, it was conducted, exclusively, by individuals purchasing the rights of monopoly from the king of Spain, or of his viceroys and governors. They, of course, made immense fortunes, as the instance of don André, who was enabled to expend 2,000,000 dollars in public works, and to leave his widow the enormous fortune of 100,000 dollars a year. At that period, therefore, wealth circulated in a very partial manner, and unbounded riches and penury and distress must have marked the general feature; but at present, when toleration and competition prevail, things have taken a widely different turn, and that wealth which before preserved one certain stream, now overflows, and diffuses itself to all around. For one merchant that acted for himself (I say for himself, because in the time of the ancient regimen, the few exclusive merchants sold licenses to others to pursue the same trade, and thereby increased the number of merchants) six years ago, there are now fifty!. Though this toleration in the American commercial system is much to be approved of, still, that peculiar vice of mad speculation, which is manifest in all their dealings, in the case of this city already betrays an evil consequence; for, if formerly there were too many poor in Orleans, there will very shortly be too few rich. The fountain of wealth now

empties itself through such numberless channels, that the supply must be trifling to all, and flow with much less velocity than when it rushed through but one or two mouths. The influx of American speculators was so great in the first instance, that the character of commerce instantaneously changed, and violence and competition, which in America means contention, reigned triumphantly abroad. This forced kind of proceeding, this ardent competition, gave an artificial value to things, and an immense profit was required on imported and exported goods: it lasted two years: commerce has now sunk to its natural level, and in consequence of the rivals in trade multiplying in a proportion beyond the capacity of the trade, every article is reduced considerably in value. British goods may be bought as cheap as in London, and the produce of the country, at least some part of it, is reduced two hundred per cent. Flour, which but one year ago sold for twelve dollars a barrel, has fallen to four, and every other article in its due proportion. As this level and diffusion of commerce can afford no more than an honest and reasonable profit, the Americans begin to be dissatisfied, and many of them have already become bankrupts, and returned to their own particular state. The great body who now remain, are commission merchants; to whom the settlers of the upper and adjacent countries consign their produce. Their demand is four and a half per cent. They make also charges for storage, wharfage, and labour, which give them a clear advantage in all of about ten per cent.; and in too many instances, they keep the property altogether to themselves, and depart, or remain, and stand the issue of a suit at law, which must ultimately prove in their favour, the American judicature being so lax that it encourages, instead of punishing and preventing its offence.

The trade of the city is conducted for the most part by four classes of men. Virginians and Kentuckeyans reign over the brokerage and commission business; the Scotch and Irish absorb all the respectable commerce of exportation and importation; the French keep magazines and stores; and the Spaniards do all the small retail of grocers' shops, cabants, and lowest order of drinking houses. People of colour and free negroes, also keep inferior shops, and sell goods and fruits.

There is no exchange, nor any other general place of mercantile resort. After sun-set, the inhabitants promenade on the Levée. The place is very favourable for the purpose,

the shipping extending along the bank, and the captains and others employed within sight. Ships have race-boards to the bank, which gives them an access so easy, that they are often visited from the shore; and it is no uncommon thing to see the sprightly dance on the deck, or the bottle circulate under the awning, while the whole town promenade the Levée, or repose under the orange-trees which decorate it in partial spots.

The shipping at present extends the entire length of the Levée, and for the most part are moored three abreast. It is composed of all nations. The merchandize for the Mississippi is exactly similar to that of the West-India trade—the race of people being nearly the same, and the climate not essentially differing.

The prices are as high as in any of the English markets. Fruit and vegetables alone are cheaper.

There are no good taverns. The custom among strangers is to live in boarding-houses, which charge from ten to fifteen dollars per week, for board and lodging, and an inferior kind of French claret for drink. Persons of good taste, and who respect their health, find their own wine. The table is excellent, being covered with fish, soup, fowls, roasted, boiled, and stewed meats, with vegetables. The dinner-hour is three. Coffee is served soon after dinner, after which it is customary to enjoy a *siesto*.

The instant the luminary sets, animation begins to rise, the public walks are crowded; the billiard rooms resound, music strikes up, and life and activity resume their joyous career.

LETTER XLIII.

Farther Particulars of New Orleans—Its Amusements and Inhabitants.

New Orleans, November, 1806.

AS the amusements of the ladies and gentlemen of this city are generally distinct, I must give you a sketch of each under separate heads.

The Americans, since their arrival here, have been so occupied by politics and legislation, that their minds have ne-

ver been sufficiently unbent to form a course of pleasures for themselves; therefore the indulgence of the table, cards and billiards are the principal fountain of the enjoyments of the men. It is not so with the French gentlemen; their pleasures are for ever varied, and of a nature to be participated by the most delicate of the female sex. This casts over them a considerable degree of refinement, and the concert, dance, promenade, and *petit souper*, are conducted with as much attention as at Paris or Rome. At times, the limits of the French entertainments extend from a partial circle, and pervade the whole town.

Besides the French and American amusements of the men, I can still trace some old Spanish recreations. On returning to my lodging late at night, I have more than once heard the guitar under the windows of a sleeping beauty, or the harp delicately touched under a corridor, over which some charming girl attentively reclined. Songs too are often heard in the silence of the night. They sometimes assume the form of a duet, and are repeated by the lover and the confidential friend who accompanies him as a guard.

It could be wished that the Spanish character were only to be discerned by their empassioned songs and innocent amours: unfortunately it often breaks out in sanguinary stabs of the stiletto, and frequent assassinations. Several Americans who have interrupted their midnight serenades, have already fallen. The remainder go armed, and have also learned to correct their conduct towards the Spaniards, whom they now find they cannot trample upon with impunity or scorn. The first class of Spaniards, who could not submit to any other government or religion than their own, have retired into Mexico: those who remain are esteemed degraded by their countrymen, and are called Catalons, by way of contempt.

The women, who in point of manners and character have a very marked superiority over the men, are divided into two ranks—the white and the brown. They have two separate ball-rooms in the city. At the white ball-room no lady of colour is admitted.

Those called the whites are principally brunettes, with deep black eyes, dark hair, and good teeth. Their persons are eminently lovely, and their movements indescribably graceful, far superior to any thing I ever witnessed in Europe. It would seem that a hot climate "calls to life each latent grace." With you the movements are rigid and the muscles unrelaxed; whereas, here the action is unre-

strained, the muscles elastic, and the frame as supple as if destitute of bone. With you the form alone is fine and beautiful: but here the various charms of grace and symmetry are heightened by the most enchanting expressions of joy and elegance of motion. In the dance these fascinating endowments are peculiarly displayed.

The dress of the white ladies is very plain and simple. The robe white, fastened under the breast with a diamond pin, and the hair in the form of a coronet, connected by small bands of precious stones and pearls. The principal amusement of the young women of this class is to ride out after sun-set in small cabriolets, which they drive themselves, with great ease and dexterity, a negro boy or girl, elegantly dressed, standing behind. In these excursions they are never attended by gentlemen, the loss of reputation being dreaded here beyond the loss of every thing else. Their public amusements are balls and concerts, which are generally well attended; their private consist of music-parties at home and conversations around the door.

The ladies have much more reserve than French women; they are even distant in their manners; and it is not till they take a *fantasie* for a gentleman, that they rise into friendship, and descend into familiarity with him; after that period they kindle into love without much difficulty, and give that passion more dignity and embellishment than you conceive it susceptible of in Europe. A Spanish Americaine in love soars above her former excellence, and becomes a new object in the creation: so sensible is her lover to her attractions, that he too changes his nature, and forgetting that the idol of his soul is human, looks up to her as a divinity, and offers at her shrine a suite of the most profound adorations. Custom has made the church the theatre for the creation, discovery, and progress of first loves. He who would gain the inestimable heart of a Spanish girl, must attend her through a series of fervid devotions; gaze on her in reverential silence, or, at the most, in tender languishment, express, "thy image steals between my God and me." If, in the course of an affair of the heart, conducted under the sanctuary and evidence of the church, the lover were to be guilty of any one act of meanness and depravity, or sully his reputation in any possible way, his mistress would tear him from her heart.

The women of colour stand next to the white in society. They are very beautiful, of a light copper colour, and tall and elegant persons. Their dress is widely different in gene-

ral from that of the white ladies; their petticoats are ornamented at the bottom with gold lace or fringe richly tasselled; their slippers are composed of gold embroidery, and their stockings interwoven with the same metal, in so fanciful a manner, as to display the shape of the leg to the best advantage. A kind of jacket made of velvet, fitted tight to the shape, and laced or buttoned in front, with long points hanging down quite round the petticoat, and trimmed at the end with pearl tassels, is also worn; and on the shoulders of the jacket is fastened a cloak made of gauze, or some such light material, which hangs as a loose train to the ground, or is occasionally fastened to the side by a clasp of jewels. Their most general head-dress is either a handkerchief of gold gauze braided in with diamonds, or else chains of gold and pearls twisted in and out through a profusion of fine black hair, which produces a pleasing effect. The bosom is covered with solitaires, composed of every different kind of jewels. Notwithstanding the beauty and wealth of these women, they are not admitted, as I before remarked, to the white assemblies. They have therefore a ball-room of their own, which is well attended, and where as beautiful persons and as graceful dancing is witnessed, as in any other assemblies of the sort whatever. A distinction subsists between ladies of colour of a very singular sort; those who are but one remove from the African cast, are subordinate to those who are from two to three, or more, and are interdicted, by custom, from intermarrying with the whites; but they are allowed, by the same authority, to become mistresses of the whites, without being dishonoured in the eyes of society: that is, they are esteemed honourable and virtuous while faithful to one man; but if, in their amours, they at any time become indiscriminate, they lose the advantage of ranking among the virtuous, and are classed in the city books among prostitutes and slaves. This, or a native disposition to continence, has such a dominion over them, that the instances of their infidelity are very rare, though they are extremely numerous, and are mistresses to the married and unmarried, and nearly to all the strangers who resort to the town. For, though infidelity is punished among them, they are no sooner disengaged from one attachment than they are at liberty to form another. The introduction of strangers to them is attended with some ceremony, and must always be through the means of the mother, or female adopted to supply her place. The inhabitants of the town never break down their regulations, or

treat them abruptly, and strangers are instructed by their acquaintance how to proceed. The Levée at sun-set is the principal market for all this traffic de cœur. There all the beauties assemble; and there all those who need the kind companion joyfully repair: all walk up and down for a considerable time, or sit under orange-trees occasionally, with the objects of their separate choice. Such an expression of reserve, morals, and decency, reigns over the women of every sort, that a stranger passes and repasses, before he can assume sufficiently to tell the one he admires the most *qu'elle est belle comme une ange*, and so forth. To an Englishman, this timid, bashful, silent demeanour, opposes difficulties which require his utmost resolution to surmount, and he walks the Levée many a pensive evening before the sense of virtue is sufficiently consumed by the new passion of his breast, to permit him to speak, or to offer terms to a parent, from which his soul shrinks, from the conviction of their being base and dishonourable. Some mothers now, on becoming acquainted with the English timidity, begin to alter their line of conduct, and suffer their daughters to remove their veil *en passant un Anglois*, or flirt their fan, or drop a handkerchief, which they receive with such gracious accents of gratitude, that a conversation may easily succeed.

The mothers always regulate the terms and make the bargain. The terms allowed the parents are generally fifty dollars a month; during which time the lover has the exclusive right to the house, where fruit, coffee, and refreshments may at any time be had, or where he may entirely live with the utmost safety and tranquillity. Many do live in this manner, notwithstanding which, I have never heard a complaint against these interesting females. In proportion as they advance in age they enter into service, &c. and are respected as much as when in their virgin state.

Negresses and female Mestizes next follow; the first are principally employed as servants, of which every family has a conisderable number; the second perform all kinds of laborious work, such as washing, and retailing fruit through the city in the hottest weather; and being considered as a cast too degraded to enter into the marriage state, they follow a legal kind of prostitution, without deeming it any disparagement to their virtue or to their honour.

Though the places of amusement are separate in the city for the distinctions in society, still there is an assembly held every Sunday evening at the Bayou, about two miles out of town, where all the beauty of the country concentrates,

without any regard to birth, wealth, or colour. The place of entertainment is called Tivoli. The room is spacious and circular; well painted and adorned, and surrounded by orange trees and aromatic shrubs, which diffuse through it a delightful odour. I went to Tivoli, and danced in a very brilliant assembly of ladies. The Spanish women excel in the waltz, and the French in cotilions.

Thus, my dear friend, have I run over every subject of interest which this place can afford: you may, perhaps, remark, that I have of late been silent on the subject of curiosities.—This country is destitute of them; or, at least, possesses none of any distinction, or, only such as are inferior to what I have already described. Reptiles are very common. Large lizards are about every yard; and snakes come into the houses from the river side. It is not a little strange, but alligators do not come near the town. Though extremely numerous above and below, they avoid the Levée, and pass always on the opposite shore. The country swarms with grasshoppers; they are very large, not less than three inches long; the body jet black, the head red.—The French call them "*chevaux du Diable.*"

There are so many descriptions of the natural productions of the Floridas, which are exactly similar to those of the Lower Louisiana, that it would be idle of me to go into their history, and therefore, I conclude correspondence for the present, as I am about to embark for England.

END OF ASHE'S TRAVELS.

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TO

ASHE'S TRAVELS IN AMERICA.

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